



The Binnacle

Victoria Model Shipbuilding Society
Victoria BC Canada
vmss@shaw.ca
<http://members.shaw.ca/vmss>



Yahoo! Newsgroup : VIRCB
Vancouver Island Radio Control Boaters

ONCE AGAIN: "A GREAT SUCCESS"



USCG Barque Eagle outward bound from Tall Ships 08
[Exclusive aerial photo by Bill Sturrock]



Victoria Model Shipbuilding Society

General Meeting – June 12, 2008

Call to order: 7:40 pm

1. Outreach: Everyone well.
2. Club Finances: Club is in good financial shape, GIC is rolling over.
3. Suggestion to make the Christmas party a special occasion by inviting as many old members as possible. **Ron Armstrong** looking for someone to build a model of the Titanic. Tour the Martin Mars water bomber June 28th, 2pm at Sprout Lake.
4. Concerning the Tall Ships, members are encouraged to take the bus. Set-up is on Wednesday. **Mike Claxton** is bringing **Ron Burchett's** pool to use.
5. **Bob Rainsford** wants to make a lighthouse on an island to float in HMYP. The previous boat-athon went well with Ron Armstrong taking the win. The boat table plaque is ready to be mounted and will be an official ceremony to mark the occasion.
6. **Powell Cup** on October 19th includes the Power Cup, starting at 10am at Beaver Lake.
7. Adjourn business portion & break

Adjournment 8:15pm

Respectfully Submitted
Scott Munford, Secretary

Special Thanks to **Barry Fox** for taking the minutes in my absence.

For Sale

Billing Boats– #600 **Bluenose II** (new \$150). Hull assembled, rest of kit complete, including sails.
Price \$60. Call **Norm Tuepah**, 1-250-477-7102 Victoria.
http://www.cornwallmodelboats.co.uk/acatalog/billing_boats_bluenose_ii.html

2008 Executive Committee

<i>President: David Taylor</i>	<i>652-6480</i>
<i>Vice-Pres: Ken Ensor</i>	<i>478-6884</i>
<i>Secretary: Scott Munford</i>	<i>382-1673</i>
<i>Treasurer: Mike Creasy</i>	<i>965-6487</i>
<i>Show Coordinator: B. Andrews</i>	<i>479-2761</i>
<i>CRD Liaison: Ken Lockley</i>	<i>477-5830</i>
<i>Barry Fox</i>	<i>294-0350</i>
<i>Parks Liaison: Dave Denton</i>	<i>478-1800</i>
<i>Binnacle Editor: Bill Sturrock</i>	<i>479-0239</i>
<i>Quartermaster: Bob Rainsford</i>	<i>383-2256</i>
<i>Librarian: Dave Denton</i>	<i>478-1800</i>
<i>Sailing Director: Barry Fox</i>	<i>294-0350</i>
<i>Publicity: Ernest Reid</i>	<i>652-8579</i>

Contributions to the Binnacle are welcomed.
Deadline for submissions: Sunday before the monthly meeting. Editor:
vmss@shaw.ca

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2008 Tall Ships' Pit Crew



*Pit Crew Chief

- *Bill Andrews
- Ron Armstrong
- Ron Burchett
- Mike Claxton
- Chris Claxton
- Mike Creasy
- Dave Denton
- Marion Denton
- Ken Ensor
- Barry Fox
- Mark Giles
- Heinz Heckl
- Hiltrud Heckl
- Ron Hillsden
- Julie Hillsden
- Alex James
- Earl Kimmerly
- Arnold
- McCutcheon



- Ilace
- McCutcheon
- John Launder
- Jack Lenfesty
- Ken Lockley
- Lois Lockley
- Scott Munford

2008 Tall Ships' Pit Crew

- Kathy Munford
- Glenn Newmeyer
- Sue Newmeyer
- Craig Paterson
- Jack Plummer
- George Rauh
- Marvin Ramus
- Bob Rainsford
- Margo Rainsford
- Ernest Reid
- Nadia Reid
- Dale Stewart
- MaryAnn Stewart
- Bill Sturrock
- Dave Taylor
- Jenny Taylor
- Len Thomas
- Mike Woodley



From the Bridge

Hi Shipmates

What a busy month, although I managed to miss the last meeting due to being in a very wet

Taiwan commissioning a 130ft Power Yacht. Thankfully we have a very good committee that worked very hard behind the scene's on the Tall Ships event and especially **Bill Andrews** co-ordinating with the Tall Ships Organisers to ensure we had all the equipment we asked for, despite their changing the game plan at the last minute. I would like to thank all the members from both the VMSS and the Nanaimo club for their support on this event. I would also like to make a **special** mention to all the Wives that also turned out to assist on the stand and in many cases helping out with setting out and putting away the boats.

We also had the Strawberry Fair down at Beaver Park this last weekend and I was a little disappointed by the lack on club members as this is the clubs way of thanking Saanich and the CRD for their support and allowing the use of the lake. To those that did turn out thank you and I think that we had a great day of boating in ideal conditions. There were quite a few inquiries about membership and interest in what we build and operate.

Our next event is the day at the Air Museum, 2 August, for their open day this is a good fun event and a relaxing day. This is followed by the Saanichton Fair which is a 3 day event and we will need a lot of support for this, to man the display and help with the paddleboat racing as well as operate our own boats. I would like to see some of the members that do not attend the meetings giving a hand with this event, 29 August to 1 Sept. There will be a morning and an afternoon shifts. I look forward to you all mailing me with info on what days you will be available.

Happy Boating
Dave T

ON THE RADAR

INFORMATION ON UPCOMING EVENTS

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| JULY 27 | BOATATHON | HYMP |
| AUGUST 2 | AIR MUSEUM | SIDNEY |
| AUGUST 28-SEPTEMBER 1st | SAANICH FAIR | |



MEETINGS: Second Thursday 7:30-9:30
313 Brunswick Place
Next is August 14th, 2008!



POWER: Sundays 10 - 12
Harrison Model Yacht Pond (HYP)
Dallas Road at Government.



SAILING: 1st and 3rd Sundays 1 - 3 PM
Beaver Lake
Next is July 17, 2008!!



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





Tall Ships 2008—A Good Time Was Had by All

Photos by Mike Woodley.





The Sub Subject

THROUGH CAUSES UNKNOWN, THE INTRO TO THIS particular column kept slip sliding away. So I reversed the usual procedure and started with what commonly comes at the end: the credits.

I thank Len Gibbs for inspiring the topic, and Scott Munford for his research—all of it should contribute to brief reviews of the British Thetis/Thunderbolt and Truculent disasters and, especially, how two accidents that cost many lives led to the greater safety of other crews.

Most all spectacular disasters with a human element are investigated in great detail, over much time and at great cost. Some yield definitive conclusions that can lead to change toward prevention of repetition; but many such probes wind up on the scrap heap of “human error”. That, often, to various degrees, is a sort of whitewash because, even if correct, it begs the question of how the chain of events ended up where it did: in death, or material loss or both? How many minds and hands did it take to screw up?

First off, let's delve into what happened to HMS Thetis in Liverpool Bay on June 1, 1939.

Thetis, the third launch in the British T-Class of modern subs slid off Cammell Laird's ways on either June 26th or 29th, 1938. Right from the get-go she displayed a number of problems: her bow planes jammed on “hard down”, she heeled to starboard and, of all things, was too light to dive dock-side. Much more work was needed, and done. At last, on that fatal June 1, 1939 she was declared ready for sea trials.



HMS Thetis bow down, stuck in the mud of Liverpool Bay [ahoy.tk-jk.net/macblog/ThetisandThunderbolt.html]

In addition to her 53-man complement, RN observers, Cammell Laird experts, Vickers Armstrong personnel, two caterers and a Mersey River pilot were on board—bringing the total to 103. Two hours into her run, all aboard except her crew were offered a lift to shore; all wanted to stay for her first dive.

Thetis did attempt to dive. Slowly, very gradually,

she was observed to get lower into the water. On board, the crew was ordered to check and recheck everything checkable, which, for some reason, included the Torpedo Officer opening the six inside doors of the front tubes. That procedure included opening the doors' pet cocks. Tubes 1 to 4 were dry. Upon opening Tube 5, water cascaded in. Not stopping it with the always handy johnny bar lever. The torpedo room and first compartment flooded. Thetis went down bow first to the 160 foot deep bottom. The crew jettisoned all fuel and drinking. That made the stern rise about 18 feet out of the water. Four men, including the Commander, escaped and survived, but 99 drowned or asphyxiated.

Through goof upon goof, the boat was not located 'til the next morning, and not salvaged until November 18, 1939, which took one more life: that of a diver.

Painstaking, meticulous investigation revealed that the small diameter drain pipe to No. 5's inside door pet



HMS Truculent [[en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMS_Truculent_\(P315\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMS_Truculent_(P315))]

cock was plugged by the bitumenous enamel paint used that rust proofed the inner surfaces of the tubes. That, ultimately, WAS THE CAUSE. It cost the Admiralty some \$700,000 and the lives of 100 well-trained men.

A main safety precaution that resulted was the “Thetis Clip”. A single metal turnbuckle that had to be undone before a tube's door could be opened by more than a fraction of an inch before unstoppable flooding could occur. Why or when No.5's outside door had been open or opened was never learned.

WWII was on now. Labour, capital and materials were scarce. Thus it was decided to rehab Thetis thoroughly. On October 26, 1940, she was recommissioned under her new name: Thunderbolt. She served valiantly, sinking ships, mining Mediterranean harbours, and getting manned torpedoes to their intended targets and back. But on her sixth patrol, on March 14, 1943, the Italians did her in—62 men with her.

Another sub disaster that yielded positive steps toward greater safety happened in the Thames Estuary on

(Continued on page 8)

Old Wood & Rusty Iron – by MIKE

CREASY

MISSISSIPPI NORTH

In 1859, American author Mark Twain received his licence as a Mississippi River steamboat pilot, and began accumulating the background to stories like “The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn”.

Many Americans came to British Columbia to try their hand at steamboating in BC, as the gold rushes drove demand for boats and men to record levels. Some succeeded; others quickly returned to the gentle waters of the American plains. Like most of the businesses which sprang up around the gold, steamboating was a cutthroat game, with big fortunes for the winners and ruin for the rest.

Speed was often the basis for ticket prices – the faster the boat, the shorter the trip and the sooner anxious miners could get to the precious gold. Since many of the boats were owned and operated by the man at the wheel, steamboat races were common.

Nothing raised steam pressure (and speed) faster than a fat side of bacon flung into the firebox and a stout wooden wedge atop the safety valve. Unfortunately, this didn't always have the desired result. As the Victoria Colonist observed in 1861, “Within the last 18 months, we have had three ... steamboats blown up...” Reason enough to make sure your cabin was nowhere near the boiler! Today, standing on the Churn Creek bridge over the Fraser near Gang Ranch, watching the big river in full spring freshet, it's hard to imagine steam-powered boats chuffing their way through the torrent, carrying loads of supplies and hopeful miners to the gold finds of the Cariboo. Hard to imagine, that is, until you cast your eyes upon the near vertical banks, reaching over a thousand feet above the river and cut at regular intervals by equally steep-sided tributary canyons. The road today in a modern 4 wheel drive truck is a breeze compared to the joys of a two-wheel oxcart bouncing over a rock-strewn trail cut from the cliffside. Getting to Barkerville these days is easy. In 1858, it involved at least two long sternwheeler journeys, plus two equally long treks across the parts the sternwheelers couldn't manage – due either to lack of a suitable river or lake, or to the presence of impassable rapids. From Victoria, Vancouver and New Westminster, sternwheelers worked to attract business – rate wars were common, as were charges of price fixing and unreasonable profits.

The routes covered were prodigious; up the lower Fraser to Port Douglas at the head of Harrison Lake, then overland to Lillooet and Soda Creek (just north of Williams Lake), or up the Fraser as far as Yale, and then overland to Soda Creek. From there, sternwheeler service reached another 410 miles up the Fraser, past Prince George and through Goat Canyon Rapids all the way to Tete Jaune Cache.

At Prince George, a left turn would take travelers up the Nechako and Stuart Rivers as far as Takla

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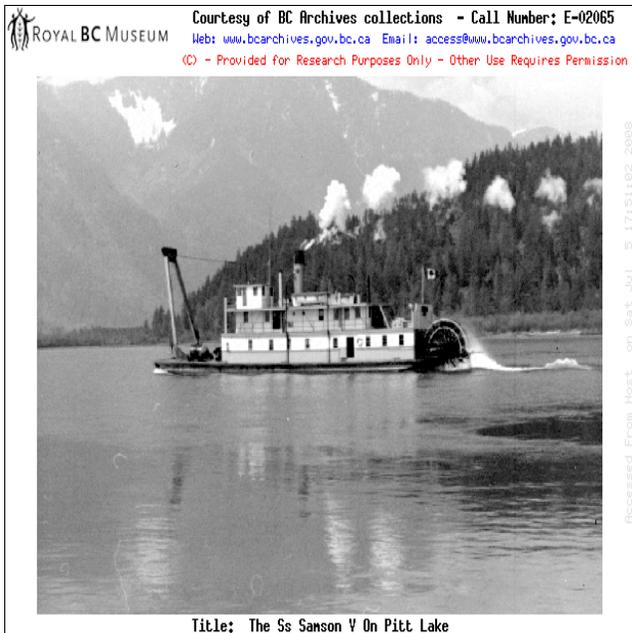
Landing. Or, a right turn at Cache Creek would reach the 25 miles to Savona's Ferry, from where the entire Shuswap Lake system was served by lake and river steamers.

In the 1860's trade for the Cariboo went by sternwheeler up the lower Fraser to Yale, or up Harrison Lake to Port Douglas. The distance to the Cariboo gold field was about 400 miles from either port, and various companies fought over the advantages and rates to be charged for either route.

The Yale route placed miners at the southern end of a rough pack trail that went all the way to the gold fields, while the Harrison Lake route required a series of portages and sternwheeler legs across Anderson and Seton Lakes before ending up at Lillooet.

Competition was intense, but once the Cariboo Wagon Road was built (joining Yale with Soda Creek in 1863 and eventually, Prince

Continued on page 5



Title: The Ss Sanson V On Pitt Lake

George), the Harrison Lake route was abandoned. Some of the boats on BC rivers were state-of-the-art for luxury and passenger amenities. Others, though, were of a more “frontier” style – like the Klondike steamers **NORA**, and her sister ships **FLORA** and **ORA**, built at Lake Bennett in 1898. These three gold-rush boats offered a ride to the next stop, period. Meals and sleeping arrangements were up to the passengers – kind of like BC Ferries “mid-coast” route. As one wag noted, they did offer running water, as long as you ran to the railing with a pail!

The Skeena was a riverboat pathway too, as steamers replaced the big freighter canoes operated for the Hudson’s Bay Company to serve outposts at Port Simpson and Masset. These canoes were built from huge cedar logs by Haida and

T’simsean carvers, capable of carrying two tons of furs, oolichan grease and other goods. Then, in 1866, the steamer **MUMFORD** made her way upriver all the way to Kitselas Canyon, about 110 miles from Port Essington (near what would become Prince Rupert), and so began the steamboat business on the Skeena.

Sternwheelers continued to be a big part of BC’s transportation scene right up until the early ‘60s with the CP Inland fleet in the Kootenays, and the federal government’s snag puller **SAMSON V**, a well known sight on the lower Fraser until 1980.

Sternwheel technology was finally defeated by the growing network of roads and railways all around the province. Next time you drive across one of the big rivers in BC, look down and imagine a sternwheeler, steam valves hissing, paddle blades flailing, heading for the next gold field.

Mark Twain never made it to this part of the world, but think how he might have described life on BC’s raging rivers compared to the slow and lazy Mississippi - Huckleberry Finn discovers white water!

Bibliography

- Paddlewheels on the Frontier, Art Downs, Evergreen Press, 1967
 Paddlewheels on the Frontier Vol 2, Art Downs, Evergreen Press, 1971
 Sternwheelers and Steam Tugs, Robert D. Turner, Sono Nis Press, 1998
 Steamboat Days on the Skeena River, Wiggs O’Neil, Northern Sentinel Press, 1960



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: vmss@shaw.ca subject line: “PhotoContest Entry”
3. Model ships and related topics only, please. **Limit of 3 entries** per person.
4. **Deadline November 15th, 2008.**
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 2009. **Questions:** email to: vmss@shaw.ca

GOOD BOATING AND SHOOTING!!

(Continued from page 5)

January 12, 1950. It involved the RN's Truculent colliding with the Swedish tanker, Divina. Not unlike her erstwhile sister ship, Thetis, Truculent (launched by Vickers Barrow September 12, 1942) too was on a test run following refit. She too, had her full crew plus 18 shipwrights on board.

By 7:00 PM, the sun had set; two-way traffic was dense. navigation lights were spread all over the sea-scape.

All this led to such confusion that the First Officer had called the captain to the bridge. But he too was puzzled by the red lights on the tanker's mast ("dangerous cargo"). All on the con concluded it was a stationary ship. Meanwhile, on Divina's bridge, Truculent was thought to be a Thames barge crossing their path on the wrong side. Suddenly, at short distance, both vessels became visible to each other. Despite last minute orders and maneuvers by both, collision was unavoidable. In a short five minutes, Truculent went away by the strong current. Some were rescued but could not report what had taken place 'til 45 minutes later, after their hypothermia had diminished.

Aboard Truculent, her First Lieutenant took immediate action. But the supply of survival gear was inadequate. Non-swimmers were given priority. And while five survivors had been picked up by a Dutch ship, only 10 out of the subsequent 64 who'd make their way out survived.



HMS Tally-Ho [home.cogeco.ca/~gchalcraft/sm/page19.html]

(**Len Gibbs** knew quite a few of the victims and survivors. He served in Tally-Ho, with Truculent on joint patrols).

Truculent was hauled up and refloated March 23, 1950. She went to the breakers [scrap yard] the following May.

For legal and monetary reasons the subsequent inquiry attributed the blame at 75/25 percent, between the sub and the tanker.

The direct and immediate "benefits" of Truculent's sad saga were threefold: (1) Led by Peter de Neumann, the Port Authority developed a more sophisticated traffic navigation/control system; (2) all subs were from then on equipped with a streaming white bow light—so bright it could make any 10 RCMP cruisers in pursuit look as if they had 40W Christmas lights, and (3) the Admiralty developed, mass produced and issued survival suits (to become known as "Truculent Suits") similar to those carried (not often enough) aboard our commercial fishing boats. Too bad it almost always takes whole families of escaped steeds before barn doors are shut. But who will argue with the "Better late than never" adage? It merely reflects a combination of human failure and human intelligence—a strange mixture that's perpetuated our world.

For at least the next two months, and a possible third one (it's up to Mr. Ed.) you will read (I hope) the text of slightly edited columns about electrically-driven models of the German's WWII G7e torpedoes. The article sports **Greg Sharpe** illustrations and was first published on pp. 34-40 of Issue 73 (June 2008) of the SubCommittee REPORT.

In closing this closing, deepest respects are expressed to the nearly 200 unfortunates who did not survive the Thetis/Thunderbolt and Truculent disasters. May Neptune and his entourage treat their spirits well.



Romanus Unicum

Maritime Museum Update – by Mike Creasy

Members will be interested to know that we are planning to organize a tour of the Maritime Museum's secret treasures, probably some time this fall. As well, we have had discussions with Museum staff about more "mutually beneficial" arrangements – things like advertising and doing something with their (now unused) model workshop.

The Maritime Museum of BC is keenly interested in working with us, and your executive are going to see

what we can do. I'll be reporting to the executive and to the general membership as things develop.

On a related note, you may have seen a TV news clip about the pending relocation of the Vancouver Maritime Museum, along with the St. Roch, and the possible break-up of the Vancouver museum's great artifact and archive collections. This, on top of the current squeeze on Victoria's museum, makes you realize how little respect is given to our history.

Only in Canada, eh?



July Sailing News

We have completed a couple of events where sailing was the primary action or at least the "centre piece".

At Tall Ships I guess you could say it was all about sailing but we did well by tethering **Dave Taylor's** schooner in the middle of the pool and let the wind sail it in circles for hours at a time. That certainly helped attract people to look at our other boats.

We have just completed the **Strawberry Festival** at Beaver Lake and had a great



Photo by Barry Fox

turnout of sailboats as well as a good number of power boats as well. We had odd but good winds virtually all day and particularly in the afternoon. We had boats on the water from about 10 in the morning until around 4 in the afternoon.

Lots of good sailing and tuning going on and the show was good. [not to mention the strawberries. Ed.]

Barry F.

BURNABY ASSOCIATION OF MARINE MODELLERS

RADIO CONTROLLED MODEL BOAT



REGATTA

TO BE HELD AT CENTRAL PARK, BURNABY B.C.

SUNDAY AUGUST 17, 2008



Page 10, BAMM Newsletter July 2008

- STEERING COMPETITION
- SAIL BOAT RACING
- HYDROPLANE RACING
- SCALE MODEL JUDGING
- MODEL BOAT DISPLAY

EVERYONE IS WELCOME



NOW THAT I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION:

Contributions of stories, anecdotes, pictures, and outright lies are needed for the 30th Anniversary of VMSS and the **The Binnacle**.

Please contact: Ron H., Ron A., Ken L. or the Editor.



MORE Tall Ships 2008 pictures

By Bill Sturrock

