

September 2019

Volume 41 Issue 9



# *The Binnacle*

Victoria Model Boats  
Victoria, B.C.



Victoria Model  
Shipbuilding Society



Romain's Bench  
Dedication

Glen Class Tugs  
Ken Lockley



Saanich Fair Photo Report

The Boats of Air Sea Rescue  
Edward White

Jack Lenfesty's Princess Kathleen



<http://www.vmss.ca>



**From  
The Bridge**

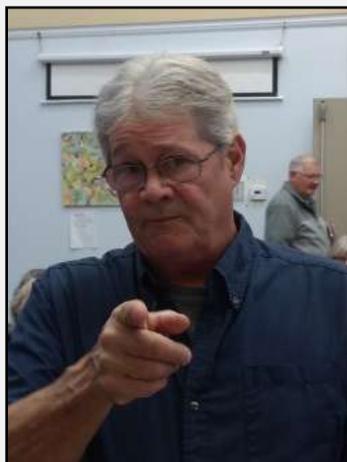
Greetings Everyone,  
Well, the Saanich Fair was a complete success. Thanks to Jim Cox and Mike Creasey for their involvement in organizing and making an enjoyable experience for all. I think everyone had a very good time and a special thanks to all the volunteers who helped out. A job well done again.

Our next event is Heritage Acres "Fall Thrash", we will take the small pond and tents and tables, and of course boats. Please volunteer if you can help out. 2 days from 10 am to 3:30 pm.

Harrison pond has been cleaned, the water changed, and, of course thanks to Kieth Lindquist for cleaning and maintaining active levels at the pond.

Happy Sailing

Mike.



**2019 Executive Committee**

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<i>Facebook: Rick Gonder</i>	<b>744-8610</b>
<i>All above area code (250)</i>	



**ON THE RADAR**

Upcoming Events

**Heritage Acres Fall Thrash, 21st-22nd  
September.  
Broadmead Lodge, Oct/Nov.**



**Meetings: Second Thursday 7:30-9:30  
St. Peter's Anglican Church, Lakehill  
3939 St. Peter's Road  
Upcoming meeting: September 12th.**



**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  
GENERAL MEETING MINUTES  
AUGUST 8TH 2019**

1  
MEETING CALLED TO ORDER AT 7:38 PM

2  
Welcome to guests

3  
Director's and sub-committee reports

HEALTH AND WELFARE-

FINANCE – REPORTED TO MEMBERSHIP BY THE TREASURER

SHOWS AND EVENTS

JULY 13 2019  
NADEN- NAVAL & MILITARY MUSEUM

AUG 31ST –SEP 3RD  
SAANICH FAIR

FALL 2019  
BROADMEAD VETS

SAILING – Nil Report

MEMBERSHIP – APPROVAL OF NEW MEMBERS (BYLAW 2.1)  
No New Members Presented

OTHER REPORTS AS REQUIRED

PARK/CITY LIASION – REPORT ON SEWER PROJECT .

HARRISON POND REPORT UPDATE – WATER RUNNING TO THE POND – POND  
CLEANING EXPENDED IN TOWARDS END OF AUGUST



UPCOMING EVENTS

FALL THRASH –HERITAGE ACRES

4

OLD BUSINESS

HERITAGE ACRES

BOAT REGISTRATION REPORT NIL PROGRESS

ROMAIN PLAQUE AND BENCH – CEREMONY – SEPTEMBER 8TH 2019

5

NEW BUSINESS

MOTION – ACCEPT 10% DISCOUNT ON PURCHASES – SUPPORT BY MEMBERSHIP

6

50/50 SALES (15 MINUTE BREAK )

7

50/50 DRAW – 055 MIKE CREASY

8

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRESENTATIONS

ARNOLD – SEA SLED – BASED ON 1914 DESIGN – BOW CONCAVE

COX – MV SMIT LONDON – REFURBISH REQUEST – ABOUT 40 HOURS

ANDERSON – TUG FOR SAIL – MINIMUM \$100.00

9

ADJOURNMENT AT 8:27 PM

Total Attendance: 15 Members.

## Romain's Bench Dedication.

Yesterday morning, Sunday 8th. September, we had a gathering at Harrison Pond, hosted by Kris Klaasen, to unveil and dedicate Romain's bench. Kris had brought Romain's big Los Angeles class submarine, Miami, and Jim Cox and he both spoke about Romain and his contribution to the club. With a number of Romain's friends and family in attendance, it was a meaningful event for all. Here's a couple of pictures.



Kris speaking about his Dad.

Jim Cox on the completed bench, a photo by Kris.



Romain himself, in the photo that Kris brought.



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After our little ceremony on Sunday, I thought it would be appropriate to "reprint" something of



Romain's writing in the Binnacle. At present I have the considerable privilege of holding much of Ron Armstrong's collection of print Binnacles in the hope of scanning them and adding them to the club website. So here, from June 1998, is what I believe to be the first of Romain's many "Sub Subject" articles. Still totally relevant.

## The Sub Subject.

The March 12th "Model Submarines" presentation to VMSS ended up sandwiched between a top layer of "The Matthew" and an urge to patronize Tim Hortons. No problem, except that the closing heading of the presentation read "Problems."

In a way this may have been fortunate. The interest shown was not disappointing. Some attendees, in fact, went on overtime to look and ask. That was nice. But some others, so it seemed, looked a tad like attendees when the magician asks for volunteers to climb up to the stage. Them's the ones I wanna get in spite of what follows.

Model submarines, of course, nudge the top in the problem basket that comes with all model building. These four, however, when conquered, make all others look picayune.

- 1) Leaks
- 2) Trim
- 3) Ballast tank size
- 4) Linkages

The foregoing is a random ranking, and may ultimately depend considerably on the builder's skill/patience, the class/shape of the prototype and access to/availability of both materials and components. For this Binnacle let's just go for the leaks....

As mentioned in March, a model sub can be built dry or wet. The dry species require permanent (lead) ballast to allow submergence, and each one of the often numerous hull penetrations has to be sealed to withstand 0.42 lbs/sq in. of water pressure for each foot of depth. Not simple and often hernia promoting. So I champion wet boats.

Wet boats, of course (except Wally's?) are not all wet. They have to have a pressure hull (PH) in which to stash all electronics, the motors and nicads - if the latter are the chosen source of juice. The PH, of course, will still sport a number of penetrations, i.e. battery leads, at times the antenna, the stuffing box, and the rods linking servos to rudder, fin, bow planes, stern planes, ballast tank valleys and, sometimes, to active periscopes, torpedo and/or missile launchers.

The ruling goal in sealing PH's with an outdoor ballast tank is to KEEP WATER OUT, and not air in. That aim for primarily one way sealing dictates the manner in which glue or silicone is applied round static penetrations (battery or antenna wires) and the orientation of all seals around rods, stuffing box or drive shaft(s).



Assuming that Lexan or equivalent material is used for the PH's bulkheads and lid or body, the surest way of sealing static penetrations is to drill an undersized hole, drive an epoxy/ca coated screw through it, cut off the head of the screw, and then solder the wire (can use washer, wire terminal and nut) to the two ends. Antennae are so thin that a hole, chamfered on both sides to make way for the sealant, will usually do the trick. If that's done, do not overlook sealing the end of the antenna wire, which will reside in the free flood part of the hull.

For penetrations involving active connectors as listed three paragraphs earlier, I have, so far, exclusively relied on Subtech products, out of New Jersey. Subtech manufactures bulkhead seals (BHS's) and stuffing boxes (SB's) in various diameters and lengths. The BHS is a brass housing, 1/4 inch diameter for inside the PH; 1/2 inch outside, that holds a neoprene seal with a lipped profile. The deeper the boat, the tighter the seal--and also the higher the drag on the rotating or sliding shaft. Subtech's BHS price is \$13 US for a four-pack, SB's are around the same price--somewhat depending on length.

As an alternative to Subtech's nifty stuff, Coast Industrial Parts, on Dupplin, carries about every size of "O" seal imaginable, together with all sundry grommets and couplings needed. Less expensive than Subtech, but my personal experience is limited to Coast's valves and tubing. Yet, I've operated another bubblehead's model that relies on Coastbought seals. Totally satisfactory. For and SB, though, I'd sooner go Subtech.

That said, the PH's lid and/or access hatch has to be sealed. In conventional designs (mine), it is common to cast an about 1/8 inch thick silicone gasket, on which the lid is pressed down with stainless studs, washers, and nuts that are spaced about 1 1/4 to 1 1/2 inch. Works fine, as long as the upper surface of the gasket is given a thin coating of Vaseline.

Assuming that all of the above have combined to yield a tightly sealed PH, it is still good practice to (very) slightly pressurize the PH. A Schraeder valve in the lid and three to five strokes from a bicycle pump will do the job.

Okay, everything is sealed, all is dry. Will it stay that way for long? Yes and No. Between workshop shelf, car trunk, and the pond, the sub may suffer husky temperature variations. And not all of the glued-together materials expand and contract in harmony. I have yet to solve that happenstance. Meanwhile, that and other problems explain why I said that submarine models take lots of maintenance and repair time between patrols.

Yours unballasted,  
Romain.  
(The only one, so far)

**NEXT BUILD:**

September 2019 by Ken Lockley

One area of interest to me is how vessels take on different life styles through the years of being afloat. In a recent issue of "Pacific Mariner", the 80 foot navel Glen class tug "Glendevon" is a beauty as a conversion to a Tug Yacht. Another great example is the Tug "Swell" which is now a mini cruise vessel with accommodations for 12 passengers. Currently in Point Hope Shipyard, is the yacht "Marabell", she's had several different rolls to play over her life.

Edward White did a great article in the June issue on the Uchuck 3. It started it's life as a US. Minesweeper and currently is a passenger freighter based in Gold River.

The ship modeler has many choices, once a building project has been decided on, the next decision is what stage of it's life are you going to model. For me I have tried to build to original plan lines. There's no shortage of ideas and projects for the model ship builder.

Some pictures of interest to follow. The magazine "Pacific Mariner" recently did a great write up on "Glendevon"



Above is the Glendevon doing some harbour duties sometime in the late 1940's.

The picture to the right is the Glendevon at her current home port of Campbell River. Note the extended main cabin to increase accommodations. McKenzie Barge and Derrick Ltd. of N. Vancouver built 3 of these vessels using wood construction. The rest of the Glen class tugs of that era were steel construction.



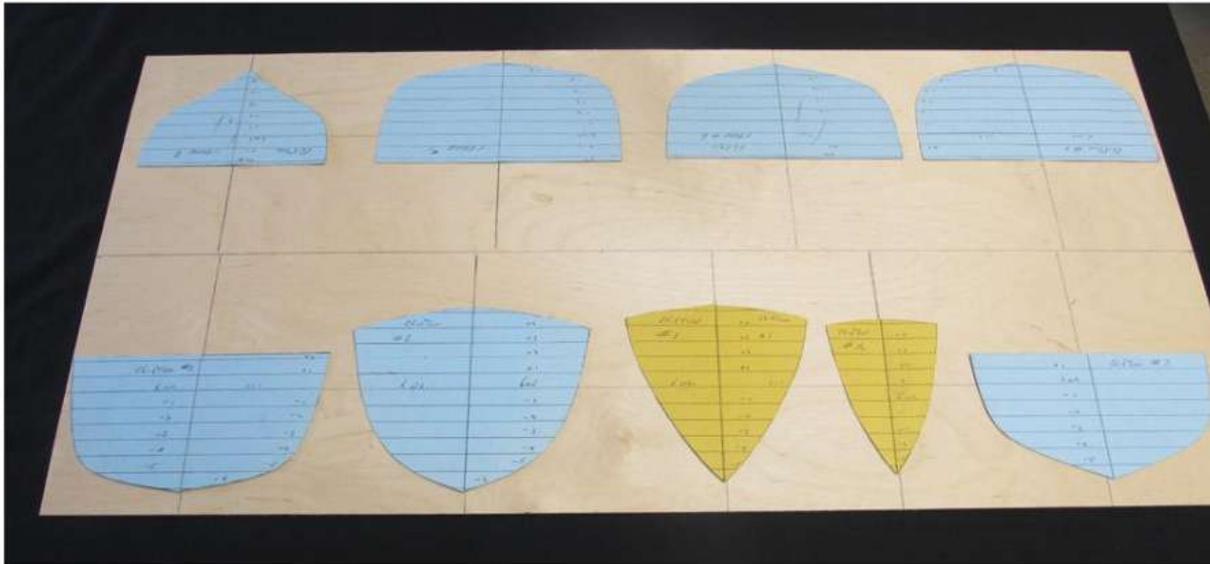


The "Swell" in Victoria pulling a barge. Note the Johnson St. bridge in the background.



The picture above is one we took of the "Swell" in Desolation Sound in mid May 2019 . The funnel is shaped to look like an old steam tug. Note the two colour deck house that makes the superstructure less boxy. She was carrying passenger and doing some shore explorations . Maximum of 12 passengers. I hope they were all having a good time.

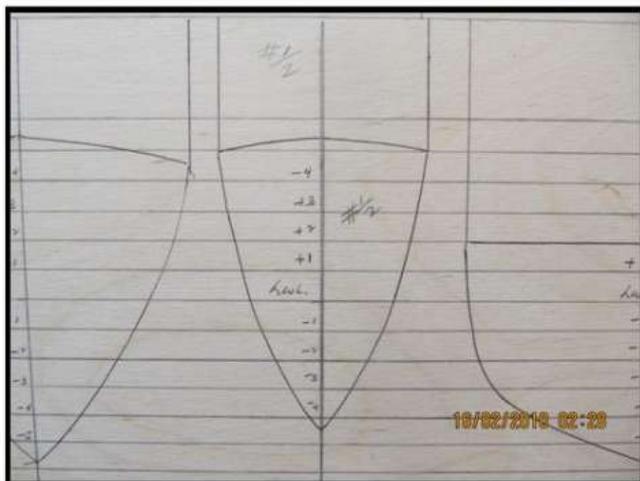
## STARTING HULL CONSTRUCTION:



The starting of hull construction is always challenging, but also very satisfying if you get it right. I pursue each step in small segments and give myself time to think am I doing this right. Today I have taken my patterns from the plans, transferred the lines to 3 mil. plywood. I use the Nordic Birch extensively for frames, keels and stem etc. Nordic birch is available at Windsor Plywood Ltd. Both locations, the Keating store and Van Isle Way store in Langford. The product comes in a 5' x 5' Sheet. I ask for a cut down the centre so I can transport it easily.

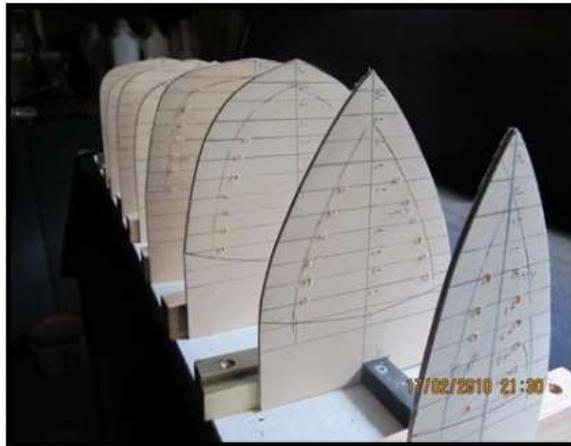
I transfer all the lines that are on my patterns to the plywood, these lines are really helpful many times during hull construction. I mostly use a scroll saw for cutting out the plywood and finish up with a small disc sander. Remember to leave the outside cutting line on you frame. Below photo shows lines are transferred onto the plywood.

Preparation for the building jig is next and this is another very important step in hull construction.



During a recent RV trip a few more deck items were built on the picnic table. Once again, Styrene is the material of choice.





The upper left picture shows a freshly painted building board ready to receive the plywood frames. I have used this board several times and by painting out all previous data on the board it makes for a clean start.



The picture upper left shows the frame or station blocks in position. Also note the black stringer running fore and aft on the base board is a centering device. Each frame is notched out to fit over the stringer. This really keeps all frames inline during the initial set up on the base board.

The picture on left is showing all stringers in position and a variety of clamps. I find what is really handy is 16 gauge plastic coated wire to use as twist ties

During the gluing of the stringers, the little spring clamps are very cheap at most dollar stores. Certainly handy for certain situations.

Lower left is the second layer of plank-ing going on. This is a very pleasing stage in hull construction. I use cedar 5/16 x 1/16 x length needed.





### Saanich Fair Report.



At the top, Mike Bush looks to be dealing with a mutiny, then left is a paddle boat race under way, and below right I can't resist the caption, "I see them stand like greyhounds in the slips"



Next is Mike Creasy's magnificent Bismark and then Jim Cox's Fletcher class deceptively looking like it floats.



Murray Bain's America's Cup sailboat catches a breath of wind, and Jim Cox's "Varlet" tug chugs around nicely. I mistakenly told someone that this was based on a Singapore tug to go under low bridges. Actually the "Varlet" spent all it's life on the Thames and it's major tributary, the Lea. But the bit about bridges was true! I can't help what infects my head.



Mike Bush's Bankert tug and my own "Playmobil" springer. Then



Mike Creasy's latest Fort/Park ship with Ron Hillsden's Shediac behind. Terry Gerard's mahogany speedboat and Ron Hillsden's



Flower class Shediac again. Ron's weathered paint job on this is great. Last is Jim Cox's high-tech Canadian submarine "Chicoutami. It kept me amused for hours!



## Jack Lenfesty's Princess Kathleen

We had an unsettling visit during the Saanich Fair from a relative of our late friend and member Jack Lenfesty.

All who knew him remember Jack fondly. He was a great story teller, a first class modeler and a truly exceptional gentleman.

Our visitor began by explaining that Jack had donated his model of the Princess Maquinna to a museum in Nanaimo, and the very beautiful Princess Kathleen to the Maritime Museum of BC.

After a lengthy, uninterrupted complaint about his treatment at the hands of the Maritime Museum, our visitor claimed that someone from "your group" had come to the house following publication of Jack's obituary and said that he had to pick up some things. This individual apparently entered through the front door and exited some time later through the basement door with the Kathleen model.

We were told that the individual in question later sent a sympathy card, with name and address. The model was subsequently recovered by the family, although the circumstances were not made clear.

The behavior of this individual, as related by our visitor, was outrageous.

I made it very clear to our visitor that VMSS had nothing to do with this apparent theft.

The Kathleen is now in the hands of the Maritime Museum of BC.

Mike Creasy  
Treasurer



Princess Kathleen in her prime.



## About Princess Kathleen.

I am glad Mike's story above came to a happy ending, and I just thought I would reprint Jack's own thoughts about the model when he first finished her.

### From the February 1988 Binnacle. "Why the Princess Kathleen."

The "Kathleen" was one of my favourite ships during the five years I spent working for the CPR BCCS after the war (1946-1951).

She was built by John Brown and Co. in Scotland in 1925, (the same year that I was built). My Godfather, W.E.Oliver was Chief Engineer on her for many years having brought the ship from Scotland in that capacity.

My first attempt at scratchbuilding has been an experience to say the least. The first problem was to obtain the plans which came from the Glasgow University archives.

I soon learned that what appears on a ship's profile plan does not mean that she was built that way, and, in the case of the Kathleen, one must be aware of the differences in her pre-war and post-war appearance.

My model is about 46" long, scale is 1/8" to the foot which is, I feel, all a person can safely handle and transport without help or a truck. She is planked in yellow cedar over 14 frames or bulkheads and has twin screws. One of the major problems in scratchbuilding is figuring out how to maintain access to the rudder servo, motors, batteries etc., with three decks to contend with.

When I first joined the club, I asked a member how to go about planking a hull and was told "Hell, just cut a plank and if it doesn't fit cut another." Looking back I agree with the advice because scratchbuilding to me is a lot of trial and error which results in great joy when it finally fits.

None of this would have been possible without the help and advice of club members too numerous to mention by name.

Finally, the model is not as perfect as I imagined it to be or would like it to be but the pleasure of seeing it grow from what I feared would be an Ugly Duckling to at least a Goose if not a Beautiful Swan, cannot be measured in time or money.

Happy building to all  
Jack Lenfesty, ex Freight Clerk,  
Princess Kathleen.



## The Boats of Air Sea Rescue.



All my life, whenever I returned to the subject of model boats, one thing has been constant. That is, the availability of both plans and kits of air sea rescue launches. The models range from 12 inches to as much as you want to carry, and they seem always to look really good on the water.

So last week, I was watching an old documentary on the Spitfire, and it reminded me of the air-sea rescue boats, so I decided to take a closer look.

When I do that, I am frequently surprised by "Why didn't I realize that before?" moments, and the first thing that I came across in this one was the association with seaplanes. In fact, one of the earliest rescues was by Hugh Robinson, a pilot and engineer of the Curtiss aircraft company, who landed one of the Curtiss seaplanes to pick up a crashed pilot on Lake Michigan in 1911.

At the start of World War 1, Britain had two separate forces that flew aeroplanes. They were the Army's Royal Flying Corps, and the Navy's Royal Naval Air Service. And of course were bitter rivals. To the extent that both forces actually had land based squadrons fighting in France right through the war. I was surprised to find out that the Navy had even signed the Sopwith aircraft company to an exclusive contract that all of its production was to go to the RNAS. So during the war the first new Sopwith aircraft went to the Navy, and then some were reluctantly passed on to the Royal Flying Corps. The Camel was first flown in combat by naval aviators! The RFC's main supplier was the Royal Aircraft Factory at Farnborough, the builders of the SE 5.

On the 1st of April, 1918, the two forces were merged to form the Royal Air Force, the first independent air force in the world. The Marine Craft Section was created almost immediately to take charge of the RNAS seaplane support vessels, inheriting some 323 boats. However, because of their war service, and with a spirited lack of cooperation from the Royal Navy, around half of these were actually unserviceable. These craft were primarily used as seaplane tenders, ferrying supplies and personnel from shore to seaplanes, and standing by for rescue operations when seaplanes were flying.

Most were capable of only ten knots. The MCS did its best with shrinking peacetime budgets but was really restricted to inshore operation.

In 1929, T.E. Lawrence, (Lawrence of Arabia) joined the RAF, and was stationed at the Flying Boat station, Mount Batten, in Plymouth Sound. Lawrence had been involved in high speed motorboat use as rescue boats, having assisted with the 1929 Schneider Trophy seaplane races at the helm of such a craft. He lobbied his commanding officer to introduce fast boats and went on to cooperate with a boat designer, Hubert Scott Paine, who was the founder of the British Power Boat Company.



The result was the 200-Class Seaplane tender, 37 1/2 feet long with two 100 hp engines, a top speed of 29 knots, and a range of 140 miles at cruising speed of 24 knots. A total of 104 of these were built and the design was further developed with the MK1 and the MK1A which were 41 1/2 feet long with 130 hp Perkins engines. These tenders continued to be built through WW2, (67 of them in total) and were the mainstay of rescue work for the first three years of the war. A few still survive.



In 1937 Scott Paine went on to design the Type Two 63 foot High Speed launch (the "Whaleback") with 3 Napier Sea Lion engines of 500 hp each and capable of 36 knots and a 500 mile range. 69 of these were built between 1940 and 1942 and they hugely improved the chances of rescue for downed airmen.

But there was a systemic problem with the MCS. It's resources were primarily deployed at seaplane bases to support the base operations. There was no real coordination of the rescue operations in general. The result was that during the Battle of Britain, an airman who ditched at sea had only a 20 % chance of rescue. So in 1941, under Air Marshal Sir Arthur "Bomber" Harris, the RAF created the Air Sea Rescue Services, headquartered with Coastal Command, and forming Air Sea Rescue Units, combining aircraft and High Speed Launches and other craft specifically for the rescue role. The aircraft were to patrol and locate downed airmen and drop survival gear to them to keep them alive until the launches or, in calm weather, seaplanes, could get to them. These units doubled the chances for ditched airmen.

There were also problems with the production of Type Two HSL's. The British Power Boat Company were heavily committed to the production of MTB's for the Navy, and the Admiralty wasn't about to give up production capacity to the RAF without a fight. (Shades of Sopwith). So under Lend/Lease the HSL design was passed to the Miami Shipbuilding Company in the US and they supplied another 39 craft with US engines. These were all known as "Miami's", most being sent to the far east for service.



Scott Paine also created a subsidiary power boat company in Canada and they were to supply 11 HSL's, based on the 73 foot motor torpedo boat hull and powered with two Packard supercharged 1250 hp engines, 45 knots, no less.

After 1942 the British Power Boat Company added a new design, the type 3 68 foot HSL, and built 91 of these by the war's end. It had a much bigger, higher, wheelhouse and proved much more comfortable for long distance work. It was to form the mainstay of the ASRS after the war. It was also known as the Hants and Dorset in a reference to the local bus company because of its blocky wheelhouse.



Then other companies also supplied the MCS.

Vosper built 15 boats based on the D class Fairmile hull with two 650 hp main engines and 2 65 hp cruising engines outside them. Only 27 knots flat out but a great seakeeper. Must have been fun for the engineer.

Thornycroft produced a total of 105 67 foot launches featuring either twin Thornycroft V12 650 hp engines or, later, three Napier Sea Lions. These were slower, only 25 knots, but were superior long range deep sea boats.



Fairmile contributed 40 long range rescue craft, 115 feet long, based on the Fairmile D, capable of 33 knots and a range of up to 2,000 nautical miles at 11 knots. These were all destined for service in the far east.



In wartime service, the most numerous class of all, were the Groves and Gutteridge General Service Pinnaces, 60 feet long, 3 Gardner 102 hp diesels or 3 130 hp Perkins diesels yielding 13 to 17 knots. They did everything and the MCS had 200 of them. As you can see, the aft hold was huge. I think of them as the mule of the service, not as fast or as glamorous as a horse, but if you want to get something done...

After the end of WW2, obviously the demand for rescue services dropped off, not only because of the war's end, but also because of the increasing reliability of aircraft, the demise of seaplanes, and, eventually the replacement of fast boats by helicopters for the role. The MCS converted many of its boats to RTTL's, Rescue and Target Towing Launches, the "Hants and Dorset" type being the favourite.

The final end of the MCS came in 1986, when it was disbanded, but it's record of over 8000 aircrew and 5000 civilians rescued is a proud one.

I've run out of time and space for this article, and I have only touched the surface.

If you want to learn and see more about these great subjects for modelling, a great place to start is at [www.rafboats.co.uk](http://www.rafboats.co.uk).

A small start would be to convert the Airfix 1:72 scale plastic kit, quite a challenge in shoehorning, and then look up the "Model Dockyard" for kits in larger scales, or chase down the plans from almost anywhere. There's enough choice to satisfy just about anyone.



Edward.

Good references for information in this article have also been:-

RAF Air Sea Rescue 1918-1986, Canwell and Sutherland.

Wikipedia, of course.

[st437.org](http://st437.org)

Canadian Nautical Research Society.

[bmpt.org.uk](http://bmpt.org.uk)

[belairdigital.co.uk](http://belairdigital.co.uk)



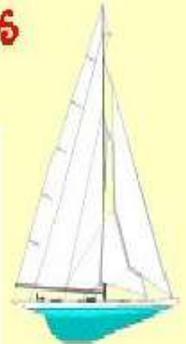
The Victoria Model Shipbuilding Society is a non-profit club, open to all, established in 1978 under the Societies Act of B.C.

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