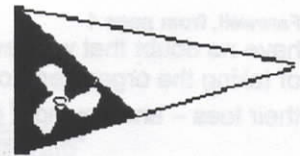




# The Binnacle



Victoria Model Shipbuilding Society  
PO Box 45083  
Victoria BC V8Z 7G9  
Email: vmss@home.com

September 2000  
Volume 22, Issue 9  
<http://members.home.net/vmss>

## 133rd Saanichton Fair—We were There!

Another successful Fair with probably the largest VMSS contingent to attend. The weather was a little cooler than usual - good for us but maybe not the ticket sellers. We ran out of suckers for the paddle boat races mid way through Monday, but the kids wanted to run the races anyway. We also started handing out suckers as a prize for hitting the bell above the donation boat.

I'd have thought of that before! Fortunately, the Bonnie-C's motor packed it in on Sunday, so she wasn't available for public use. She will be repaired before the Hillside show, and I hope the boom boats will also be finished for use at Hillside.

Apart from the usual boats including the ever popular *Princess Kathleen* and *Emily Maude*, Jack Plummer had a submarine, Ken Lockley, Mike Hill and Ron Hillsden had sailboats.

**Most Impressive Sight of the Fair:** Ron Armstrong's experimental smoke generator operated better than expected. Any WW1 destroyer captain would have burst his buttons with pride at the smoke screen produced. Our little corner of the fairground disappeared in a pea-soup fog. A very popular event with Mike's kids! They want to do it again!

**Best Quote of the Fair:** 'The little kid in us never goes away - it just gets goofier as we grow older' - Doug Allen  
**Most frequent stupid comment:** 'What do you mean it's not the *Titanic*? - it looks just like it!'

### FAREWELL TO A FRIEND Julie Hillsden

It is with sadness that we announce the passing of Geoff Walton. Capt. Geoff was a long-time member and supporter of VMSS who, last year, was awarded Honorary Membership.

By his own admission, Geoff was a "rabble-rouser". Having done his turn as Binnacle editor and regatta organizer, he felt it was his duty to keep the Executive on their toes. He liked nothing better than a good verbal sparring match and it didn't much matter to him whether or not he won the point - he just liked to argue it. He and I had some real good knock down, drag 'em out fights. When we were done, I would call him an ornery old Brit (I could do that, being one myself) and he would laugh. He loved it.

When he wasn't being ornery, Geoff was a prolific builder whose models just kept getting bigger and bigger. One of the last ones he completed was a supertanker that was a behemoth. The Walton Fleet was one of the largest in the club.

Capt. Geoff will be missed, but I

Continued on page 2



### Dates to Remember

Oct 8 Fungatta at Harrison Pond see page 3

Oct 12 AGM

Oct 21+22 Hillside Shopping Centre see page 3

Nov 9 Regular Meeting

Dec 14 Xmas Social

Jan 9 Regular Meeting

Feb 2-4? CanWest Mall

Feb 8 Regular Meeting

Every Sunday

Harrison Pond

Power: 9:30

Small Sailboats: 1:30

1st and 3rd Sundays,:

Elk Lake

Large Sailboats 9:30

### Inside

2. From the Bridge
2. Notice of AGM
2. Kaslo Regatta Report
2. Tech Tip
3. Tug *Point Gray*
3. Safety Tips
3. Oct 8 Regatta
3. Hillside Show
4. Financial report
5. Smoke

6. Sub Subject
7. Book Review/Library
8. Unclassified Ads
8. Sponsor Ads

### 2000 Executive

President:	Ron Armstrong	391-0101
Secretary:	John McHutchion	480-4048
Treasurer:	Derek Woollard	658 1150
Directors:	Scott Ringrose	744-3048
	Rob Woodward	474-5912
	Mike Gibson	474-6539



Farewell, from page 1

have no doubt that wherever he is, he is in the process of taking the organizers to task – just to keep them on their toes – and having a good laugh about it.



## From the Bridge

This summer, too late in starting, is now ending. I'm sorry that my schedule would not allow me more runs at Harrison. One absence was due to my foray to Kaslo (see later). I understand Sundays have been well attended by both members and the public. I hope Harrison Docks were well used!

And now a sad note. After a long painful struggle with cancer, Geoff Walton succumbed on August 27. He battled long past what his doctors expected. Some will say this was his Yorkshire cussedness. Geoff has been a member since 1985 and his contributions were many and varied as I re-discovered when I perused Binnacle back issues. He was director, editor, columnist, regatta organizer and fleet builder and operator. He also gave freely of his time and skills to help fellow members. He and I disagreed often, but he always had the best interests of the club at heart. He is at peace at last. Our deepest sympathy to Heather and his family.

Finally, please start thinking seriously about Executive 2001. Nominations for all officers and directors are needed for the AGM.

Fine lines and smooth wake.

R.A.

### Notice of Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting will be held on Thursday November 9, 2000 at 19:30 at the Royal Oak Lions Hall. This is our regular meeting night and place, this notice is published to comply with the Societies Act and our own Articles of Incorporation.

Officers and Directors will be elected at the November AGM. All positions are subject to election. If you would like to serve in any position and can stand for nomination.

Please call Derek Woollard at 658-1150.



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### Lake Deep, Mountain High—

#### The Kaslo Regatta August 12 & 13, 2000

Set amongst the magnificent peaks of the Selkirk Range in a beautiful lagoon on Kootenay Lake, this was the third annual SS *Moyie* model boat regatta. It started in 1998 to celebrate the 100th birthday of the SS *Moyie*, the oldest living sternwheeler in Western Canada.

I was lucky to be accommodated by Ken and Dawn Butler in their New Denver home, 35 miles west. Ken is the Project Manager on the full sized ship and organizer of the regatta.

The regatta was a bit unusual. The operating contest priority was time, but without handicaps. So my *MOYIE* and *TANYA DAWN* were competing head to head with a 1930s' runabout, a PT boat, a DDE, a fair-mile and the star of the show...an Empress Cabin Cruiser powered by a weed whacker engine! Even the best steering could not overcome the vast speed differences.

Nor did my old ships stand a chance in the static competition. Next to the full sized vessel was a display of sternwheelers, a tug and a ferry by top Kootenay modeller Bert Learmouth. He took 1st, 2nd and 3rd even though his ships didn't compete on the steering course because they are not working models.

I did take the prize for the furthest away entrant, the hospitality was great and the weather perfect!

R.A.

### Knife Tip

One of my favourite tools is a pocket knife made by Gillette - it takes a razor blade. I got mine from my grandfather, and therein lies the problem - it was designed to take a razor blade Gillette stopped manufacturing a very long time ago. It was the grandfather to the 'Blue Blade'! I modify single edge blades when I need to replace one. It's worth the hassle - much better than hobby knives.

I was in London Drugs one day and when a clerk went to cut a label off for me, she pulled a knife out and I was delighted to see it used a razor blade as a cutting edge! More delighted to find out it sells for \$2! It's made by MAILPAK as their product #016 - Box Cutter. The blade is replaceable (standard single edge blade). You find it in the postal supplies section in postal outlets, and of course, London Drugs. RH

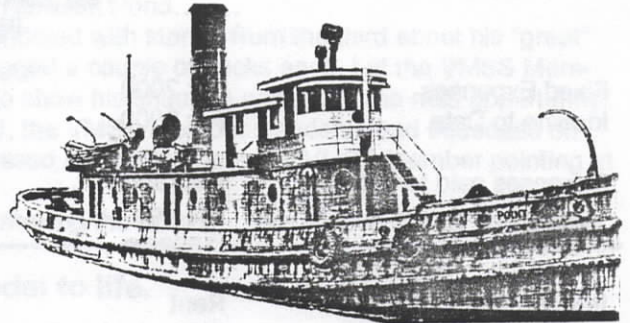
### New Look for the Binnacle

I am publishing the Binnacle on our web site as an experiment. To eliminate any duplication of work, I have made some changes to formatting. You don't see most of the changes, but the ones you do see are necessary to make my life a little easier while I figure out what is the easy way of doing things. Feedback is welcome. RH



**POINT GRAY - B.C. COASTAL TUG****Ken Lockley**

In a recent conversation with John Gough about old Tugs on our coast, I recollected that John had built a model of the *POINT GRAY*. Like Don McLeod with his *ANYOX*, John had very little to go on as far as plans are concerned. I really admire these fellows who can plough ahead with just a couple of pictures and a few specs, as I have a tendency to go overboard in finding out the history of what I might or might not build. I have looked up in my Library and found nothing that I could add to the *POINT GRAY* story. Here is John's description and a photo.

**TUG - POINT GRAY By John Gough**

The tug was built in 1919 in N. Vancouver, and was employed by the Provincial Government to tow a dredger on the Fraser River. (FRASER RIVER DREDGING CO.) Later this company was part of the crown corporation "B.C. STEAMSHIPS".

Hull Construction was Steel Riveted Construction. Her demise came when she struck rocks in Portlier Pass in fog in 1949. Her tow rammed her stern. After a delay of two weeks, waiting for a high tide to float her off, bad weather rendered her a total loss. She rested on a shelf 40 ft. below the surface for several years, then slid off into deep water upside down. Divers had salvaged some parts by that time. JG.

**Adventures in Modeling****Safety Tips A Modeler's Practical Guide to Safety (and First Aid) in the Hobby Room**

1. After impaling your left index finger with a #61 twist drill, do not try to pull it out. Push it through. In a few days, if infection doesn't set in, you can resume modeling.
2. After slicing your left middle finger deeply with an X-Acto #11 blade, a simple bandage made of super glue and a shop towel will stanch the flow of blood and let you resume modeling.
3. If using burning sprue to create realistic smoke stains, be careful not to let small globs of burning plastic to drop onto your unprotected instep; however, if you forget this rule, do not try to remove the burning plastic with your fingers. Instead, take the bowl of water you use for wet sanding and/or decal soaking to douse the flame and cool the plastic. An icepack on the ankle will permit you to resume modeling at once; however, you won't be running any marathons any time soon.
4. When sniffing modeling glue, do NOT attempt to sniff cyanoacrylic glue. This merely leads to nasal congestion.
5. When you glue your fingers together with crazy glue, do not attempt to separate them with an X-Acto knife. Instead, pull them apart - the skin will grow back remarkably quickly. However, if you crazy glue an important and delicate part to your finger, it is acceptable to use an X-Acto knife to salvage the part. Don't worry - you'll heal (and refer to Safety Tip #2 above).
6. When you spill paint on your wife's new off-white living room carpet (distracted by watching Lethal Weapon in order to model one of Roger's many boats), blame it on the cat. If you don't have a cat, immediately go to the pet store and buy one. Be sure to spill paint on the cat to make your story believable.
7. When you accidentally drop your X-Acto knife and it lands point-down in your lap, don't blame the cat - just make sure you don't bleed on the carpet. Before removing the knife, review Safety Tip #2 - but do not, under any circumstances, confuse an X-Acto knife with a #61 twist drill and try to push it through as noted in Safety Tip #1 - pull it out, as soon as you have your crazy glue and shop towel ready.
8. When sanding, if you get dust in your eye, do not rub your eye if you've recently been using crazy glue.

Good luck and happy modeling!

(Ed Note: Took this off the internet, but forgot where I got it. I usually credit the people I steal from! If it's yours, sorry!)

**This year's final regatta will be Oct 8**

The course will be set up for large boats, no club boat. Skippers meeting at 11am. Both judges are hard asses. Also, Mike Gibson judged Rob at the last regatta, and I'm sure it was in his best interest to be tough on Rob. Rob Woodward 474-5912

**Hillside Shopping Centre setup (Oct 20)**

Derek Woollard is coordinating the Oct 21+22 Hillside show. Please take your boats there after 7:00pm Friday and remove them Sunday at 5:00pm. Use the Shelbourne St doors for access if you can't get in! Derek 658-1150



August 2000

# The Binnacle

## Victoria Model Shipbuilding Society Year 2000 Month Ending July31st Financial Report

Fixed Expenses	For 2000	\$2,175.31
Income to Date	For 2000	\$2,715.75

Expenses paid to date	Insurance	\$600.00
	PO Box	74.04
	Binnacle	244.41

Items outstanding	Rent	
	Binnacle July-December	
	Christmas Social	
	Society Act Fee	

Bank Deposits	January	\$648.00
	February	652.00
	March	346.00
	April	197.50
	May No deposit	
	June	80.25
	July	213.50
	July (See Note)	578.00
	Total	\$2,715.75

### Note:

The July Income was increased by the sum of \$500 which is a very generous donation from one of our more active members who wishes to remain anonymous.

Monthly Breakdown	April 5	Members Paid	175.00
		Raffle	12.50
		Misc	10.00
		Deposit	197.50
	May 2	Members Paid	70.00
		Raffle	12.50
		minus goods 2.25	
		Deposit	80.25
	June	Raffle	13.50
		Pacific Coast Savings	100.00
		Huber Trophies	65.00
		Lowell Briggs Ad	35.00
		Deposit	213.50
	July	Member	35.00
		Raffle	13.50
		Donation	500.00
		Misc	29.50
		Deposit	578.00

The Next Financial Statement will be in the October Binnacle  
as September is the Club's Fiscal Year End.



## Love a duck

This story may explain the size of the duck population at Harrison Pond.....

Three men go duck hunting one day. Two of them are inundated with stories from the third about his "great" duck hunting abilities. After a few hours the first two men have bagged a couple of ducks each, but the VMSS Member hasn't taken a shot. They question him on this, so he agrees to show his shooting abilities at the next opportunity. A few moments later, one lone duck comes flying by. As promised, the VMSS Member stands up and squeezes off one shot. The duck keeps flying! "Gentlemen, you have just witnessed a miracle," says the VMSS Member pointing at the receding duck, "for there flies a dead duck."

Ed—be careful where you step... Duck jokes seem to be making the rounds....We all love ducks, so standby

## A low cost, effective smoke unit can bring your model to life.

Thanks to the Etherow Model Boat Club, UK

Although larger than certain commercial units, this one can use almost any light oil and can be cleaned if fouled up. Most of the commercially made units only use their own fuel and use of others can quickly clog it up, at which time you can throw it away as it can't be cleaned.

All you need is some nichrome wire, a thin glass tube, a metal rod that slides freely inside the glass tube, and a reservoir for the oil. In this case the heating unit sits inside a large glass test tube which act as a reservoir.

Start by cutting the glass tube to a suitable length for your boats funnel. I used about 60mm for a tug. The thin glass tube is easily cut by filing around and then simply breaking the tube where you filed. The tube will break cleanly and not splinter if you file correctly. (just in case, wear eye protection)

Wind the wire on the thin glass tube. It can be attached at both ends with small clamps made from thin brass strips or 'liquid metal'. This is also where you will have to experiment. I recommend you use a separate battery for this unit. Dependant upon the voltage you use, the length of wire required will differ. As a guide, I use a 7.2V Ni-Cad pack to power this unit and need to use about 63 cm of wire. The longer the wire, the fewer amps are drawn BUT if the wire is too long, not enough heat will be made to burn the oil well enough.

The wire wound glass tube must slide inside the test tube. Cut the test tube length by filing or using a router cutter in your Dremel. With the element assembly inside the boiling tube, mark where the wire ends and cut holes in the side of the tube to thread the wires through (if this looks like too much trouble, simply take them out the top). Connect the wires to the heater and slowly bring the wires and element down inside the tube. I prefer to use a stiff, uninsulated wire here, joining to the main power wire outside

the tube with a couple of small connecting blocks with the plastic removed from them (or they smoke as well!). If you connect directly to the element, use silicone wire that is heat resistant. Add some baby oil, 3 in 1 or similar to the test tube up to about a third the way up. If you watch, you will see the oil rising between the metal rod and inside of the thin tube. This is 'capillary action' and feeds the unit with a constant supply of oil until the reservoir (test tube) is empty.

It may well be a good idea to line the funnel with some heat reflective tape but DON'T use this in a plastic funnel!

## A Blast from the Past!

Former member Norm Fisher left us 8 years ago to move to Detroit. He has since moved to Bellevue Wa. Norm visited our website last week and sends this note:

My name is Norm Fisher and I used to be a member of your group about 8 years ago. I had three models: HMCS Haida, IJNS Yamato and my little tug Seaspray. I still have them. I was delighted to find your web site (it's fabulous) and hope I can stay in touch with all of you. Please say hello to everyone for me. I hope to come up and visit some of your upcoming events. Life has been so busy for me I haven't done much modelling. I want to start up again this winter.

Take care everyone, and happy modelling!

Norm and his fibreglas expert father are working on a couple of 1/48 Flower Class Corvettes. See me if you want his e-mail address.

RH



## THE SUB SUBJECT

Owing to unexpected feedback and comments on the F.A.Q.s recital in the August Binnacle, I've decided to soldier on, and put the wind-up Markin topic off till next month or later. As an aside—and others share my feelings—I generally enjoy pondside questions, 'cause I like to talk about the hobby cum obsession. At times, though, the chatter is as irksome and disruptive as canned laughter on a sit-coms soundtrack. For example: (1) while a model is dived, and I've already lost track of its whereabouts, (2) during gas-ups of Florida's Tridents, and (3) while preparing either the 1:96 Miami or the 1:100 Boomer for launch. Tell you why.

Some years back, at Pine Lake near Issaquah WA, two veteran U.S. Navy submariners chatted me up so intently that I overlooked final tightening of Miami 5 pressure hull access hatch. She sank within minutes. I paid a husky young man to salvage her, and he did it right quickly. Still, the electronics—i.e. servos and RAM sonar—lost their zest for life. All told: + \$150 in fees and replacements.

Q. How do you know where your boat is?

A. Here at the pond, I often don't—unless I can keep her at periscope depth. In a lake, I look for a vantage point, with the sun in my back.

Q. Do you have a little pump in the sub?

A. No, but those are used, indeed. They can either pump air, shifting it from the ballast tank to a reservoir where it's stored under pressure till needed to blow out water, or pump water. But if you pump water, you usually need a snorkel (tube) to take in air. Not too skookum.

Q. You often hit other models?

A. Almost as often as there's another one on the pond.

Q. Whenever I see you take the sub out of the pond, it oozes water. Does it leak?

A. Not the so-called pressure hull, which houses the electronics, but otherwise she's a 'wet' model. The water you saw is part of the model's ballast. Cheap ballast, and I don't have to transport it.

Q. Does your boat hurt the water, mister?

A. Doesn't seem to. It looks as if it stays wet and liquid. In fact, I think my model makes it feel useful. Just sitting there in a pond can't be fun, uh?

R. You some kind O' nut, or just corny? (I turned my back.)

Q. Is that sound (RAM 'sonar') made by a tape?

A. No, it's a small, electronic board, made by R.A.M. in New Jersey. The board can record sound for about 30 seconds, then it repeats and repeats, as long as the switch is on. RAM provides a gamut of sounds: diesel engines, fog horns, whoopers

Q. (Looking at 1:96 Miami, with the top off.) It sure looks as if you know a lot about electronics.

A. Truth be known, I'm just lucky if I know what to plug in where, and how to keep everything dry. I have to use my car's manual twice a year, to reset the clock.

Q. Why don't you put lights on your sub?

A. Errrr . . . maybe I'm too lazy, or not interested, or both. Easily done, though. Could use coloured LEDs, and hook them up to the RAM's second phase switch. 'On' while surfaced, 'off' while submerged.

Q. How much did it cost?

A. Ask your mum. She'll remember from last week and the weeks before.

Q. How long did it take you to make?

A. Ask your dad. He'll remember from last week and the weeks before. You should write down my answers.

R. You have pen and paper on juh?



Q. Tell me, do your models take much maintenance?

A. Not all that much. Not since I got most of the bugs out of 'em. I do dry them off after runs, lube accessible points about once a month, and replace certain seals and valve cores once a year, thereabouts.

Q. How do you get your boat back?

A. Here at the pond, with the radio most often. In a pinch, I can use a lead-ballasted rescue line or slip into my hip waders. Out at a lake, I try to make sure to strike up a friendly conversation with people in swim gear, and do so before launch.

Q. What did you use to build that fast one? (The 1:125.)

A. The straight part of the hull is a length of PVC sewer pipe, the tapered ends (bow & stern cones) are made out of layered/laminated wood, known as the 'bread-and-butter' method.

Q. Did you make that nice, shiny thing at the end?

A. No, I can't cast bronze. I bought this one in New Jersey (the 1:96), that one in Nebraska (1:125) and the big one (the Boomer's) came from England. I think they all are from the Prop Shop, in England. By and large, though, seven bladders don't show up in too many catalogues.

Q. What motors do you use?

A. Just one in each model, 'cause they're all single-screw driven. All of six Volts. I believe they vary in power from 1/25th to 1/20th of a HP. The one in the big boat (the 67" Florida) was given to me, and it may have spent its youth in a Dustbuster, but I won't swear to that. All I care about is that it moves the model with ease, runs smooth and quiet, and doesn't drain the batteries too fast. And it stays cool.

Q. Ever been on a submarine?

A. Yes and no. I've visited museum subs though—three of 'em, and each one twice. USS Pampanito (SS-383) in San Francisco, USS Blueback (SS-581) in Portland, and the Soviet Foxtrot U-521 over in New Westminster. And last year I was promised a ride on USS Florida (SSBN 728), but it looks as if the Bangor Bassets promises are the calibre of Hollywood marriage vows, or about as hollow as wooden shoes.

Q. (From several V.M.S.S. members.) What's your next project, Romain?

A. Right now, I'm having the modeling struggle of my life, building an Amtrac—an amphibious tank. Can't get it to run or steer, and till that's under my belt, I won't even start the asymmetrical superstructure. It'll take me into the next millennium, the way it's (not) going. Next, it's a toss-up. I'll either do a floating dry dock, or rebuild a 39" Seehund mini-sub that came to me, third-hand, through a club member.

Next month, most all likely: restoring my 57-year-old wind-up Marklin sub.

But The Editor also wants a column (or two?) on building GRP sub hulls. (I also need a new spell checker. Pages 6 and 7 are covered with red squiggly lines. But 'skookum' seems to have been it's final undoing! - ed)

Romanus Unicum

## BOOK REVIEW:

'CONFEDERATE GUNBOAT' C 1860

The SS *Planter* was a wooden hulled, shallow draft gunboat built at Charleston, South Carolina. She served as an armed transport and dispatch boat, carrying supplies and armaments to local forts and batteries. She had white officers and a black slave crew of eight. In early May 1862, the crew plotted to seize the steamer and escape at 0300 hours when the crew and their families were safely aboard and the officers were asleep ashore. '*Planter*' headed down towards the harbour mouth, giving the correct signals to the forts as she passed. The fugitives succeeded in reaching the blockading Union fleet where they surrendered to the nearest gunboat.

The above is just an example of the short explanations that accompany each profile of over 1200 ships.

This book and several other books and periodicals were given to the Club by Margaret Jones, widow of our

Continued on page 8



Book Review continued from page 5  
member Eric Jones.

We are most grateful to Margaret for this valuable gift. Ken Lockley will register them in our library. These books will be well received by members throughout the years. Marlinspike

#### Unclassified Ads

##### Dingy Dinghy wanted

Needed: 6'-8' fibreglass dinghy for use at Beaver Lake by our club members. We would especially like to beg, borrow or buy a dinghy which is to be used by the sailors for placing marks out and the occasionally runaway. If anyone can help or have any suggestions, please contact Rob Woodward @474-5912 or Ken Lockley @477-5830.

Paul Jordan 388-0059 is looking for a R/C boat for a 10 year old.

Ron Baker Smith 479-2902 has an almost completed R/C boat for sale. Please call him for details.

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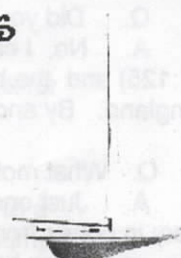
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