



# *The Binnacle*

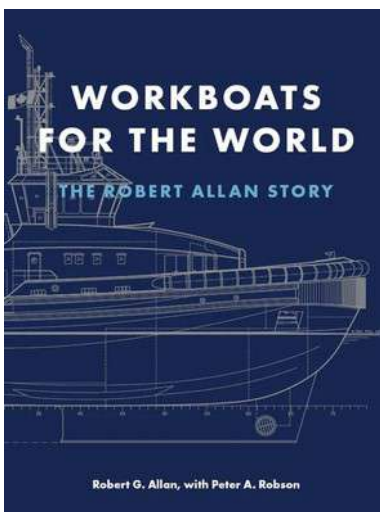
*August 2023*

*Volume 45 Issue 8*



*Ken Scotten*

**Ken Lockley on Moorcock  
And much more.**



**Edward White on a  
"Must Have" book.**



## From the Bridge

Greetings All,  
Well August is here and the weather continues to be outstanding. I hope you have been able to take advantage of the weather and get down to the pond with your boats. Sunday August 13 will be an informal tug boat day at the pond. Bring your boat out and have fun pushing, pulling, or steering you tugboat around the pond. This is for bragging rights at the pond.

Because we will not be at the Saanich Fair this year it has been decided to hold the \$20 Boat Build and the Denton cup at the pond on the Sunday of the Labour Day Long Weekend. Tune up your boat builds and bring your spirit and enthusiasm to the pond that day. It should be fun.

There will be no General Meeting this month, so enjoy the summer evening. The executive have decided to go with in person meetings quarterly, the first one will be the Annual General Meeting in October at St. Paul's Church. The following in person meetings will be in January, April, and July. We will continue to hold Zoom meetings in the months in between unless it is deemed we don't require them. Therefore, September's Meeting will be via Zoom, keep an eye out around the beginning of September for the meeting invite.

The Port Alberni will be having a pond with boats on display 2-3 September, a couple of our members were thinking of going but with the highway still under construction it may be a bit of chance whether you will get through or stuck in a big line up.

One final note, former member and president Ken Scotten passed away recently. I wasn't in the club when he was president but he ran a tight ship. I met Ken while at NOTC Venture doing my Naval Officer training, he was a wonderful man and always had time for you, he will be missed.

David Nelson  
President



## 2023 Executive Committee

President: Dave Nelson	812 1942
Vice-Pres: Mike Claxton	479-6367
Secretary: Vacant	
Treasurer: Mike Creasy	888-4860
Director @ Large: Calvin VanElsakker	477-5830
Binnacle Editor: Edward White	385-6168
Quartermaster: Vacant	
Membership: Bev Andrews	479-2761
All above area code (250)	



### On the Radar!

In person meetings will now be quarterly, starting in October. In between, we will meet on Zoom.



Regular General Meetings, 2<sup>nd</sup>. Thursday, 7:30 pm. Quarterly in person at St Peter's Anglican Church Hall, St. Peter's road, Lakehill. Otherwise by Zoom. Next meeting 10<sup>th</sup>. August by Zoom.



Every Sunday Morning, 9am-ish to 11:30-ish at Harrison Model Yacht Pond, Dallas road.



The Langford Lake Navy.  
Wednesday Mornings 9 :30 ish, Leigh Rd. At Tillicum.



## Ken Scotten

A Victoria Model Shipbuilding Society Past President, Ken has passed away.

Ken joined our group in 2001, became a director in 2002 and President in 2003. He brought plenty of enthusiasm and organizational skill. Under his 3 year leadership, we flourished and grew. He insisted that there be model boats and projects at each meeting because “we are a model boat club”. Meetings were half business and half entertainment and education.

Ken was a professional mariner and Senior Naval Officer. He generously arranged some navy related perks for us. We got tour of the workings of the dry dock, a ride on the supply ship, HMCS Protecteur, and some time in the Navy’s ship simulator.

We were a busy club under Ken’s watch. He organized people to do things. Club activities included the Battle of Atlantic Memorial Sail-past and Regatta, Powell and Harrison Cups, several sailing regattas and several power regattas. In addition, we participated in activities of other organizations including:

- Canwest Hobby Show
- Sidney Museum Show
- several events with the Maritime Museum
- Maple Bay Regatta
- Cowichan Bay Regatta
- Mid Island Modellers show
- Sidney Canada Days Celebration
- Strawberry Festival
- Several inter-club Sailing events, and
- the Tall Ship Festival.

Ken left his mark on our club and he is well remembered and respected.

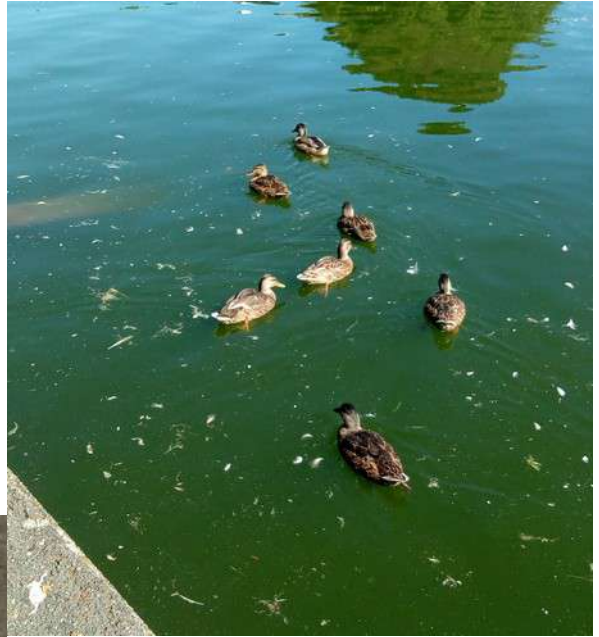
Fair winds and following seas, Ken.

Ron Hillsden.

Just a gentle Sunday



Duncan's boats in messy water.



Some of the culprits.



Bill brought Beamsville.



Max and Ivy launch Nirvana.



Beamsville finds clean water.



*Dave's conversion of Vanguard.*



*Mike's Springer.*



*Jim Cox's RG 65.*



*Mike Claxton's Bobby O.*

## IN THE WORKSHOP

AUGUST 2023

Ken Lockley



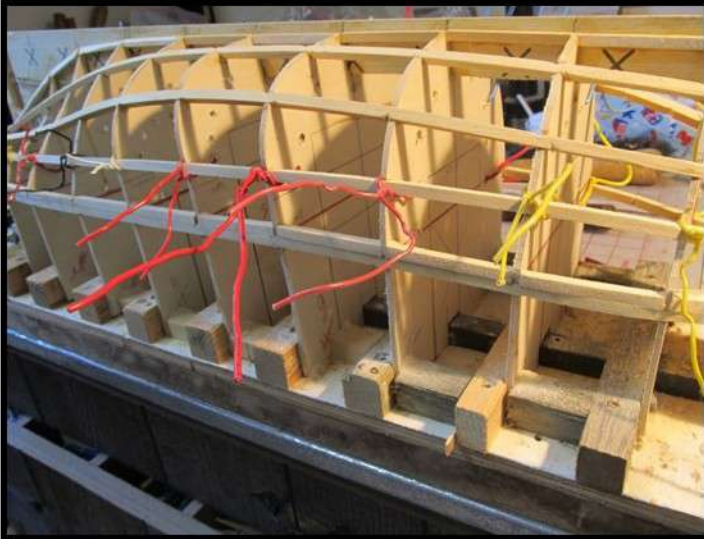
My model of the above tug is underway which you will see in the following pages. Very recently, on Victoria Model Boats on Facebook, there were pictures posted showing two tugs built by George Boyd. These vessels "Fairplay One and Fairplay Two", really revved up my enthusiasm to get started on "Moorcock". The pictures on the next page show all the frames in place and starting to get the longitude stringers placed from the bow to stern. I know not many of you want to build hulls but this process is a labour of love for me and this one is the 16th hull over the last eight years. The picture above is from the "Ship Nostalgia" Collection.

This picture to the right is one of George Boyd's Tugs mentioned above. This builder is very prolific and I think he has built about ten of these beauties. As you see, the degree of deck detail is excellent and the balance of the different aspects of the model seem exactly right to me. I don't know for sure but I suspect that's George looking at tug models. Well done George !!!!



**Building a piece of history:** What I like so much about this hobby, is we are creating a vessel that has a history, it's had a life, it's a means of enterprise, provided some life saving services, providing comradery to it's crew members. And memory's for many people. Building a model of any vessel is a worthwhile endeavour in my mind.

**Random pictures in order of construction**





Rick Gonder has embarked on sharing and financing this project, the above tug, Charles Cates 4.

I started building the hull at the end of May. Ron Burchett had it for motor installation and Korts for about 4 weeks. It came back to me for decks and Bulwarks for about 3 weeks. Rick picks it up today August 2 to complete painting and deck house. Interesting concept.



### TITEBOND III ULTIMATE WOOD GLUE

Titebond III Ultimate Wood Glue is the first one-part, water cleanup wood glue ever offered that is proven waterproof. The waterproof formula passes the ANSI/HPVA Type I water-resistance specification and offers superior bond strength, longer open assembly time and lower application temperature. Titebond III is non-toxic, solvent ...

[more](#)

[LIST AVAILABLE SIZES AND SDS](#)

[FIND WOODWORKING GLUES](#)

[GET LITERATURE](#)

[WATCH VIDEO](#)

Miniature wood rasps available at Amazon for \$10.00.

Aqua-set and Titebond glues available at Industrial Plastics. Good value in all three products.



## ARMCHAIR READING:

Over the years I have read many sea stories and continue to search for good reads:

Here is a small list of favorites:

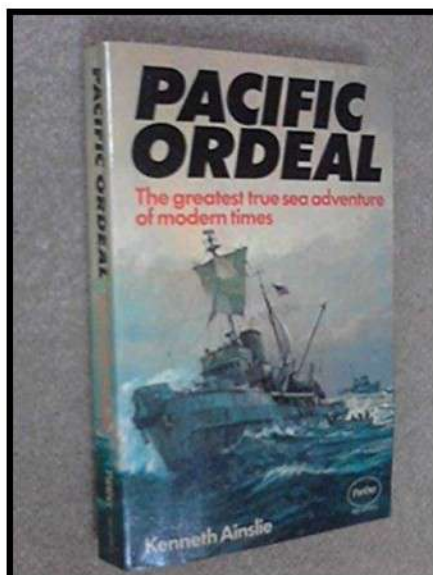
“Hungry as the Sea “ by Wilbur Smith, this is pure fiction but a good read.

“Pacific Ordeal” by Kenneth Ainslie, a true story and very good read

“Grey Seas Under” by Farley Mowat, a true story very well described.

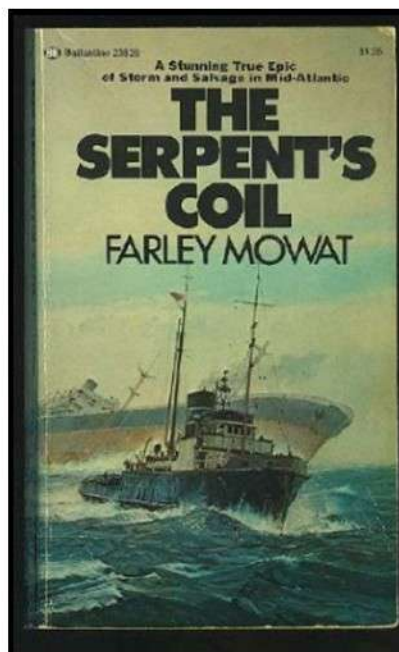
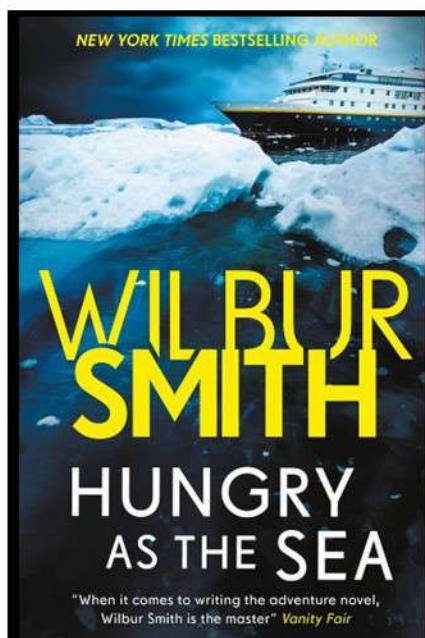
“Serpents Coil” by Farley Mowat, another good true tale.

This is intended on being a growing list, if you have any suggestions please contact me.



The cover artist in Grey seas under depicts “Foundation Franklin” in Farley Mowat’s book.

The “Serpent’s Coil” features the tugboat “Foundation Josephine”



Let me know what you what you would like to share as your favorite sea story ??

Ken Lockley at  
lk.lockley@outlook.com

## Endless Inspiration.

A close friend has lent me a quite wonderful book, and I would like to share a small part of its contents with you. The book is called "Workboats for the World" and is the story of the British Columbia company Robert Allan, Naval Architects. It was written by Robert G Allan in association with Peter Robson, published by Harbour Publishing in 2022.

It's not cheap, some \$95, but your coffee table definitely has a place waiting for it.

The basic story is that of three generations of a Scottish Canadian family and their company, spanning just over a hundred years, and leaving a legacy of marvellous variety to the Province, the Country, and the world. I will follow the pattern of the book in first sketching the history of the family and their business, and then next month dealing in more detail with some of their outstanding designs.



*Three generations, Robert, Bob, and Rob Allan, with Caroline.*

Robert Allan was born in 1884 in Scotland, the son of a successful builder, James Allan. At 14, he was apprenticed to the drawing office of Fairfield Shipbuilding and Engineering. He was gifted academically and earned a bursary to attend Glasgow University to study Naval Architecture. He graduated from there in 1907, and continued to work for Fairfields until 1912. He moved to Cammel Laird's, Birkenhead from 1913 to 1915, working on the Town class cruiser, Birkenhead, and the last King George V dreadnought, Audacious. In this time he met and married Caroline Malcolm Brittain.



*King George V Dreadnought.*



*HMS Audacious.*

In 1915 he moved to Tyneside and worked through the war on tankers and motor torpedo boats. There, Caroline presented him with his son, Robert Frederick Allan, in September 1916.

With peace in 1919, of course, the shipbuilding industry slumped, and Robert and Caroline decided to seek a future in Vancouver, British Columbia. He was employed first, rather briefly, at Coughlin's shipyard in Vancouver, and then in 1920 he took the job of Chief Draughtsman at Wallace Shipyards in North Vancouver, where his main task was to design the Princess Louise for Canadian Pacific. (Princess Louise served on the run from B.C. to Alaska for forty years.)



Robert Allan left Wallace, (by then Burrard Shipyards), in 1927. He had a brief partnership with George Stackhouse, and then set up in his own independent business by the beginning of 1929.

But the thirties were lean times for all businesses and by 1933 he had given up his downtown offices and started to work from the basement of his home. He made a living and a reputation from work on coastal patrol vessels and a few personal yachts.



*Meander, 1934, a yacht for businessman George Kidd..*

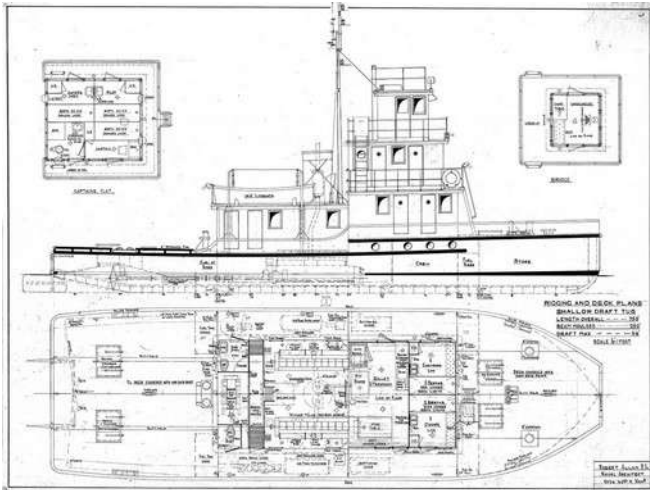
During the second world war he was quite busy with the design of large fishing vessels for the West Coast and with a number of ferries. He bought a new house with a larger basement and continued to work from his home, partnering with his son, until he retired and Bobby Allan took the company to new offices in 1966. Robert was a significant figure in the Vancouver Scottish ex-patriate community, lecturing on Scottish history, language, and Robbie Burns regularly. He had a partner in crime in this activity, his daughter in law, Nancy Masson, who was a brilliant singer, specializing in Scottish traditional songs.

Bobby Allan had grown up as an accomplished mechanic and especially a ship modeller, and attended UBC as an engineering student until a serious illness forced him to drop out before completing the degree. He got work at Burrard Dry Dock where he stayed through WW2, notably working as project manager on the conversion of Prince Robert into an armed merchant cruiser. He married Nancy Masson in June 1943, who was to become a huge asset to the company for the rest of his career. In 1945 Burrard landed a contract for a series of colliers for France, and Robert Allan was awarded the job of preparing the working drawings. It was more than Robert Allan could manage on his own, and Bobby left Burrard to join his father formally in the family business.

The two of them worked together over the next twenty years, with Bobby steadily taking over more of the load and responsibility as Robert eased toward retirement. Their mainstay was working vessels, lots of fishing boats, increasing numbers of tugs, patrol craft, and even mission vessels for Columbia Coast missions. There was the odd ferry, and, a portent of the future, a super shallow draft tug for Yellowknife Transportation, the Sandy Jane.



*Robert and Bob Allan*



From 1945 onwards, they became much more scrupulous in keeping copies of all their drawings and archives, and they became very generous in allowing modellers access to these drawings, a tradition which they have continued.

### *Sandy Jane*

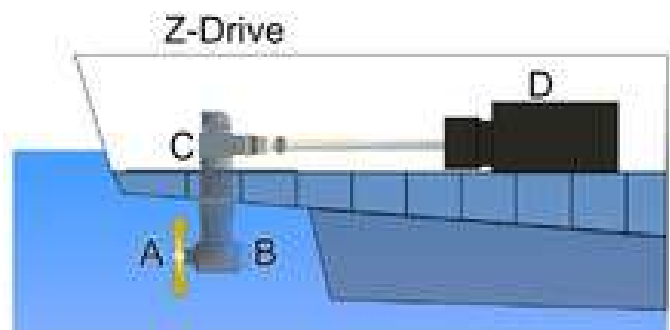
By the early 1960's the basement, entirely under Bobby's control, was bursting at the seams, with eight people working in it, and Nancy as the accounts, payroll, and office management departments. It was time to get a set of professional offices, and this they did in 1966, at West 72nd. Avenue. At that time, there was a Federal Shipbuilding Subsidy programme in place, and business was booming as steel hulls were built to supercede the previous wooden construction. Barges and barge towing tugs were needed to open up coastal development. Self loading and self dumping barges were developed and so were ocean-going tug/barge systems.

Bobby and Nancy's son, Robert G Allan (Rob) was growing up and had decided to attend his grandfather's school, Glasgow University, to take, what else, Naval Architecture. He stayed in the UK for a few years to pick up experience, (and a lady, Enneke). By 1973 the heavy workload caused Bobby to call him back to the family business. He came, reasonably expecting to take over as his father eased out. There was lots of work throughout the 1970's, and the firm started to expand into overseas markets with an office venture in Singapore in 1979.

But in 1977 Nancy was diagnosed with cancer, and Bobby rapidly reduced his workload to look after her. While he was doing this, he also was found to have cancer. Nancy died in 1980, and Bobby followed her in 1981. So Rob and Enneke, still raising three young sons, found themselves in charge of a significant and challenging business in their thirties. They rose to the occasion.

The eighties were a very tough time for the company. Work dried up all over the world, and Rob had to rely on Federal government support for the industry to keep the firm afloat. But he did much more than that. He decided to invest in computer aided design and draughting, and in training his people to convert to it from the traditional work on paper. I know from my own interest in CAD and my very limited success in trying to learn it, that this was a major leap of faith for all involved, but it put Robert Allan Ltd. in the forefront of the newest and most versatile design tool yet. Linking up with computer controlled tools in the shipyards can create parts that are a marvel of precision at minimal cost.

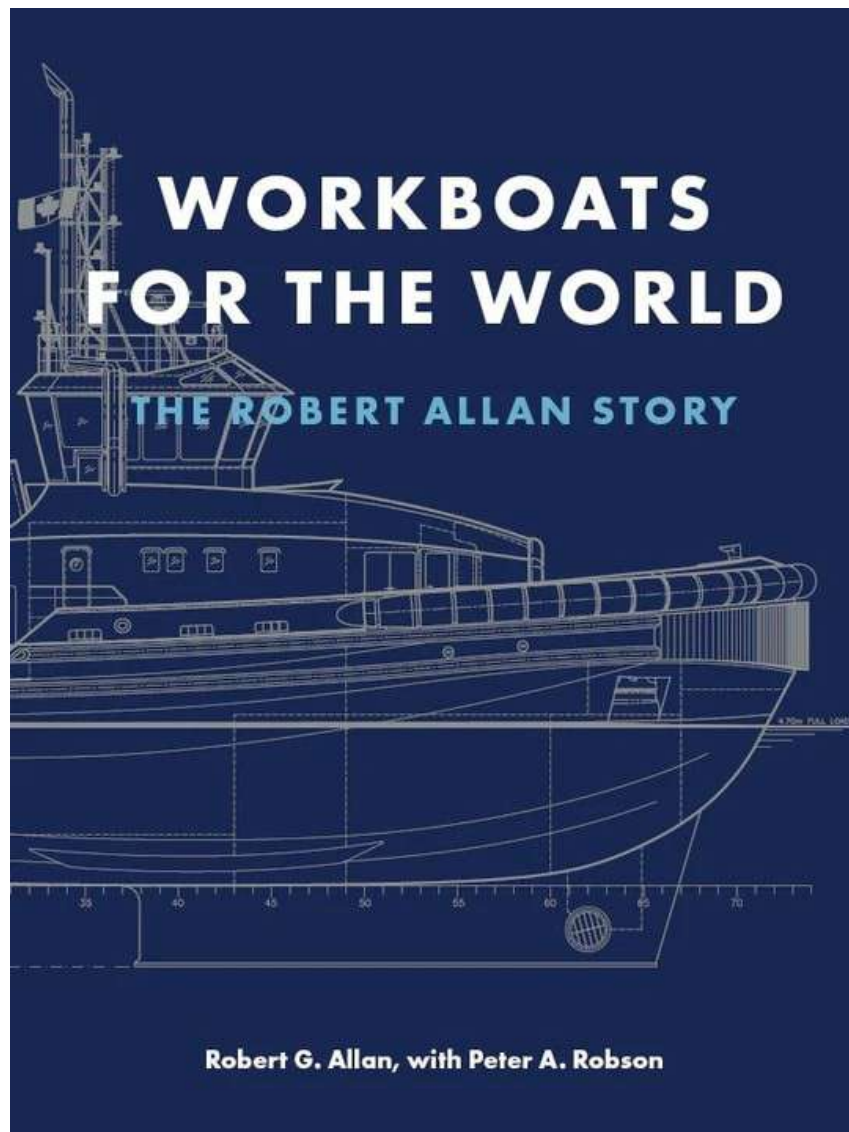
The company also got the contract for Eleu, their first tug built with an azimuthal drive (Z-drive). This drive (developed in Europe), gives the tug the ability to direct it's thrust in any direction, a huge advantage in handling bigger ships. At the same time the container ships were pushing shipping companies into ever larger designs, with computer tracking of containers to massively reduce costs and improve trade security. That gave the company the credibility to expand its



business world-wide, and to be at the forefront of the boom in tugs driven by the container shipping industry. From 1980 to 2020 the annual revenue increased from around \$1 million to exceed \$20 million, and the name Robert Allan gained world-wide recognition as the leader in workboat design.

The story comes up to the present with a terrific ending. As Rob came to retirement, none of his three sons had chosen the family firm as their future. Rob looked at a future for his company as sold to Corporate interests, and didn't like it. So in consultation with his senior employees, he put together a scheme to convert it to 100% employee ownership. Starting in 2008 with ten employee owners, it now has some 27, with Rob still involved as a consultant.

Next month, I plan to go into much more detail about individual designs. In the meantime I suggest that almost all of you get this book firmly onto your birthday and Christmas lists.



*We thank our corporate supporters*



**Our Website is,  
[vmss.ca](http://vmss.ca)**