



News Letter August 2004.

Since the last news letter, your Executive Committee has been very active in many ways. Obviously the need to establish our future has been uppermost in all our minds, and your Chairman Charles Du Cane has been in consultation with the many contacts offered to the Trust. Many of these contacts have arisen as a direct result of the excellent coverage given to our plight, by the Southern Daily Echo.

We have investigated Portsmouth Naval Dockyard, the old HMS Hornet at Gosport, Vosper's at Woolston, Cowes, Calshot, Fawley Power Station, Totton quay, HMS Daedalus at Lee on Solent, and many more smaller sites in the Southampton area.

We have been as far afield as Dartmouth to the West and Essex to the East, with Scotland being the furthest.

We have approached the land owner, Oceanic, but with a sympathetic but negative response.

We tried to acquire the site next door to the Trust from SEEDA (South East England Development Agency) but to no avail.

We have had the support of our Vice President and MP Dr Julian Lewis, the Leader of the Hampshire County Council, as well as all our local Council Leaders, doing their best to help us find a site.

Despite all this work, the sites have all been refused to us, or been well beyond our means financially or, and in addition, operationally unsuitable.

However, out of all this gloom came a call to the Trust from a gentleman clutching the Daily Echo report, asking whether his Group could be of assistance.

Charles Du Cane immediately took up this offer and followed it through, please see separate letter. Operationally we have been very active with as many public attractions and events as we can manage. The Volunteer team has been absolutely magnificent in their response to the many calls to arms, and without them our fund raising would have been impossible.

Those who know the Trust will remember the piece of land situated in the back yard and on the river side of our plot.

This wedge shaped bit of land, bounded by a fence and trees to the north, and having an old barge on it, and covered in vegetation, was totally useless to us.

To have cleared it would have cost a lot of money, and having done so it would still have been useless to the Trust.

We therefore approached the landowner Oceanic, and offered this bit of land back to them.

Oceanic agreed to accept this land back, and immediately cleared the entire site of tress, undergrowth, concrete slabs, old barges etc, and prepared a large open area with a hardcore surface.

The area is bounded by our northern entry door to the shed.

The benefit to Oceanic is that they can use this area as a car park, for new cars.

The benefit to the Trust was immediate, as we were able to use the area, at no cost, as our car park for Easter, as well as an area where we could put up visiting attractions. We have been offered this use again should the site be available, when we need it.

We will be able to use the site to set up cranes and bring in the road transport, to load up our boats and containers, when the time comes.

Oceanic in turn makes the Trust a donation of £850.00 per month.

This translates into £15,000.00 over an 18 month period. Add to this the funding available to donations, and we hope you will agree this was a wise decision made!

The NFDC agreed with our application to have the site zero rated, for rates purposes, and we received a payment refund for last year and save £1500.00 per year from this benefit.

We have cleaned and tidied the Shed, to the extent that it is quite user friendly. Any further work in this regard is not considered worthwhile, as we are leaving, so we will keep it clean and tidy.

Arrangements are in hand to make all our exhibits transportable, and have them wheel capable on site, to give maximum operational benefit to the new abode.

We are preparing pallets of cut timber chock supports, to send away with the boats.

The wood we are using comes from the Hythe Pier restoration work, and in return for sponsoring a replacement plank on the pier, we have been given a huge amount of the replaced timber. The

name "British Military Powerboat Trust" will be burned into the plank, so we will always have a reminder of our Marchwood presence !

The shop has been doing good business through the year.

As we will in all probability not be fully functional next summer, we are hoping to empty the shop shelves this summer. As the move may well include a name change, the maintaining of BMPT marked stock may become money tied up, and unable to be recovered. With the money in the bank, new stock can be ordered with our new situation in mind.

We have reduced the Trust to a defined "footprint", ie the boats ,the containers and the portacabins. To achieve this state we are getting all non Trust idle items removed as soon as possible. We will then be in a position to move as and when the time comes . We may also be able to offer further parts of the site back to Oceanic early, in order to realise more much needed donations, to help achieve the eventual move.

This has been done in the light of the meetings Charles du Cane has had with World of Boats.

MTB 331 and MTB 71, have been approved by the County to be moved to a place for safe restoration, whilst remaining in the Trust collection, eventually operational on the water.

ST1502 has had both engines lifted into position in the boat, and now the electrical systems can be attended to. 1502 will hopefully be ready for launching in April/May 2005.

HMS Ark Royal FMB progresses steadily and she has also recently had her engine fitted.

It is indeed a wonderful site to see so many smiling faces, as a difficult hurdle is jumped with success, and the next stages can be attacked with vigour.

Budgets are presently bearing the strain very well, but as progress is made, the unseen snags cause raised eyebrows in the accounts department!

She should be ready for launching at the same time as 1502.

Humber remains on her stands and is a regular open attraction to visitors. We have established that she belongs to the Trust.

We have 2 complete engines and gearboxes for her, and will hopefully bring these to the trust in the near future.

The Gull engine will be delivered back to us shortly, so she will be complete. We have used her on 2 occasions this year, whilst attending outside shows, with much interest being shown in her history.

HMS Dainty FMD remains on her trailer on display, and no work has been undertaken on her as yet.

Rosie, FMB sister to Ark Royal, is on a trailer, to show the before and after situation. No work has been undertaken on her this year.

RSL 1664 remains outside, and has had a new set of cradles made for her. She has been landscaped into the new back yard, and with new paint and her pennant number proud is looking very good indeed. We will have her fully repainted and secured against the elements by the end of the summer.

142 remains in the yard. We recently moved her to allow her to rest more easily, on cradles. The owner of this boat will be deciding soon as to what her future should be.

Target is resting on a borrowed trailer in the back yard, and we hope to transfer her to the wooden trailer originally belonging to Humber.

The idea is to bring her into the shed at a future date, if this becomes possible.

A certain amount of work has been done on her, but she has a long way to go to look good again.

ST 1510 remains in the shed, and the future for her will be decided with her owner in the near future.

That leaves us with our German collection.

"Gus", the stainless steel boat, is under constant attentive restoration, and whilst we are pretty sure of her pedigree, a decision as to how she should be finished has yet to be made.

The E-Boat S130 still lies on the mud berth, floating with every tide.

She takes on water from damage sustained whilst mooring her on arrival from Germany, but is pumped out every week. It is our intention to get her out of the water in the very near future. We will seal her underwater hull, and then prepare her for a trip to an as yet undisclosed destination, for a full restoration.

Dunkirk Little Ships still share our shed, and we have given them one months flexible notice to leave the sheds. DKLS have made a very generous donation to the Trust, and we have agreed with DKLS that this donation will cover their occupation until we eventually have to ask them to leave. They have 3 boats on site, 2 in the shed. Arkian is coming on by leaps and bounds, as they now have a retired pattern maker and chippy, working full time on her .

The workshops as you know were emptied of PBR equipment, and we were very lucky to have found Derek Primmer, a retired pattern maker and carpenter. He moved his entire workshop into ours, and we paid to have all the equipment professionally electrically connected up. This cost has been shared between BMPT and DKLS, and comes to a total of £1700.00.

This is much cheaper than the kit offered to us by PBR and does a very effective job.

The equipment is owned by BMPT and DKLS equally, and Derek has agreed that either he pays us for the whole amount, or we auction off the equipment when we leave, and split the income with DKLS. Derek works for the Trust as required, at no cost to the Trust.

Herewith you will find the accounts for the year 2003/2004.

As you will recall, we started the year off with a serious deficit in the bank. However due only to the concerted efforts of so many willing and tireless volunteers, the situation has been turned around, and we now have an amount in excess of £20,000.00 in the general account.

The restoration account is well stocked as well, with 1502 + FMB + S130 .

We have managed to pay back all outstanding accounts, as well as two private loans of £2000 and £1000 made to the Trust in its time of need.

Our monthly income of about £2000.00 , this varies according to door taking's, exceeds our monthly outgoing's quite considerably. Whilst this is a satisfactory situation as we are now, we need to have a balance of £50,000.00 to make our move possible. We will continue to strive for this target, and ask for your assistance in any way to make this possible.

There is possibility of a budget of £5000.00 being needed to get the e-boat attended to, as well as additional funds being needed to complete 1502 and FMB.

We are going to reduce the prices in the shop to clear the stock, so please at the AGM, consider your Christmas gift list.

We have been donated 10 prints from a German source. The proceeds are to be put to the restoration fund for S130, currently standing at £100.00.

The prints are subtitled "Detected by British destroyer star shells in the English Channel east of Dover while in wait for a Merchantman to make for the high sea"

Called "Scnellbootskrieg 1942/43" they show two S-boats on a calm Channel night lit up by star shell...with finite details of the boats and their crews at action stations. It is on the web site now, for you to see. We are asking £50.00 per print including. All money goes to the e-boat restoration fund.

The web site has been up and running since February this year, and we have had about 13000 hits to date. Very many thanks to all of you who have sent material to be included on the site, especially Phil Simons who has tirelessly answered so many fascinating questions from the ether, and Ted Else for his contributions to the Gay and Dark class sites. We will continue to expand the site as new material is received.

See both 1502 and FMB with engines in place, on the site.

Our thanks to all those members who continue to support the Trust at this time.

We will need to think about the way forward with regard to membership, in a new situation, which may well not be under the BMPT banner. The possibility of continuing membership under whatever new umbrella we find to shelter our prized boats and artefacts , needs to be discussed by us all. This future will hopefully open up new horizons for us all, whilst not losing the ethos which has been built up around our own boats and their history. We have invited a senior team leader from the World of Boats to be with us at the AGM, to answer any questions you may have regarding our proposed plans for the Trust. Your input is essential to our moving forward with a common aim.

We look forward to seeing you at the AGM on the 2nd October at 1100 at Marchwood, and afterwards for something to eat and drink.

Richard Hellyer
Secretary