

Monthly News Letter

Boathouse 4 Volunteers

December 2019



As we reach the end of 2019 here is a chance to review the activities over the past twelve months. To bring back some memories and check on some long-term progress.

Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust



cables were 'sorted' out (Who said)? More of that later in the year. **Cyclops** was still on hold. **ST 1502** had her engine covers replaced along with some new anodes and polished propellers.

Dghajsa – Wilson Pickett – Pauline P had been persevering with her chosen task. The paintwork on the Dghajsa was really coming on. She had completely stripped all the old paint from the detailed carving, repainted with stunningly bright new paint and she had made a start on the hull.

MGB 81 – Following her review in the previous month by Motor Boat and Yachting magazine she had been used in anger a couple of times in the month whilst her coding work was being progressed. **Landing Craft Assault LCA F 8** most of the restoration work on her frames had been completed, her new engines had been delivered and her marine ply hull had been replaced. All her metal work had been sand blasted and primed. **Armed Steam Cutter ASC 26 'Falmouth'** now had most of her new planks in place, there will be a few small additions later and quite a few of her steamed timbers are going back in. **CMB4 Replica** build has moved forward, Whaler John had fitted all three of his breast hooks and the transom knees were put in place along

January 2019 –



ST 1502 Was out of the water with the volunteers carrying out some cosmetic improvements. We were stripping off all of her flsly anti-foul and giving her a new coat.

Dghajsa – Wilson Pickett – Pauline had started on her gunwales and sheer plank. **MGB 81** – Was truly back home moored alongside the Heritage Pontoon after her big refit. She had had a review conducted by the Motor Boat and Yachting magazine. See the link below <https://www.mby.com/videos/new-boats/video-mgb-81-review> She was ready to start her programme of work to get her coded.

Landing Craft Assault LCA F 8 – The contractors had started replacing the timbers that were damaged beyond repair whilst retaining as much of the original boat as they could.

Armed Steam Cutter ASC 26 'Falmouth' – 'Big Matt and his team continued to make good progress. Replacing the damaged planking

New Build CMB4 - This was the month that we started to fit the first steamed timbers, initially we had the help of some students on lone from the Southampton University. Oscar was experimenting with the laser level to mark off the locations accurately. (We never really did achieve it). Whaler John made a start on the breast hooks along with Ian P.

February 2019 – Danae's quirky throttle



with lots of gluing and nailing of the steamed timbers. Jimmy Millis had made a start on the transom chine logs doing a lot of cutting and fettling. Diggory was obviously very happy with the CMB4 progress as he was seen doing a little jig with his thumbs well and truly 'up', Gabi drew the short straw and polished the smoke stack of Queen Victoria's Steam cutter Osborne. Tiger oversaw the testing of the cranes with some very big 'Big man's' bags of water.

March 2019– Dartmouth Gig Restoration- Tom B made her some stretchers and foot- rests to help once



she was finally launched and pulled around the harbour. The **1502** team were working hard to get all the final tiddly bits finished. She had new floorboards as well as the engine covers and a nice paint job over her superstructure. **HSL 102** had her annual maintenance program progressed and in addition to the cosmetic work and her anti-fouling and sacrificial anodes being replaced etc. she also had three new propeller shafts fitted along with all the associated cutlass bearings. **Dghajsa – Wilson Pickett** - Pauline P painted a carved wooden plaque removed from the supporting display board off Wilson Pickett. **Landing Craft Assault LCA F 8** – Landau UK returned her to us in the month and she was almost ready to have her armour plating put back on. **Armed Steam Cutter ASR26 'Falmouth'** was continued as the planking and timbering was

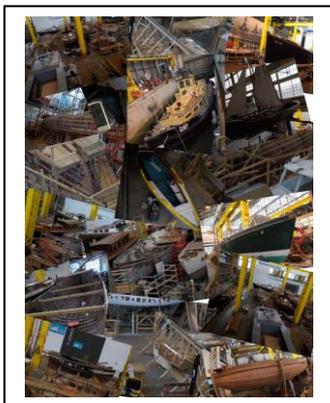
progressed. **CMB4 Replica** progress this month saw us hit a couple of significant stages, the first we removed the transom supports to make way for the second significant stage which was the high- level staging. John P and Keith started to fit the side deck reinforcement sections for the deck cleats. The transom chine logs were dry fitted for the first time. **A New Arrival** was delivered during this month, we were lucky enough to take delivery of Janet, another Ex RN steam cutter.

April 2019 - Motor Whaler Danae – She continued use through the month as our general purpose work boat



doing regular harbour runs, she was also used as a mini tug boat when **Steam Cutter SC 438** was launched. **Dartmouth Gig Restoration-** The day finally came in the month for the gig to go back afloat following the completion of her restoration. This was the culmination of three and a half years work. Tom, Jim and Janet spent some time stitching and then re-stitching leather bands onto her oars. Congratulations to all the volunteers that had been involved in bringing her back to life. **HSL 102 and MGB 81** were both moved away from the Heritage pontoons area in readiness for the new pontoons to be put in place. **Landing Craft Assault LCA F 8** – Landau UK continued with the restoration and her armour plating started to go back on. **Armed Steam Cutter ASC 26 'Falmouth'** continued to make progress as more and more planks were removed, spiled, re-made and fitted onto the oiled calico. **New Build CMB4** Steve and David S finished off the high-level stairway to Paradise giving us access to the top of the boat without using the 'Howdah'. The transom knees

were fitted along with several hundred fairing wedges and a lot of surplus glue removed from the new steamed timbers. It was about now that we started to get to grips with the dreaded sheer stringer around the transition from fully round to the edged deck section forward. This proved to be a never - ending saga consisting of taking timber off then putting it back on again only to take it off later. A true saga of attrition. We steamed and fitted the very first deck timbers this month, little did we guess that they wouldn't go back in until November. April was also the month that the new pontoons were being put in place.



May 2019 – Work was finally re-started on **Cyclops**, albeit only some bench fitting making up the long-held crutches for her oars. **Dartmouth Gig** – Having finished her restoration she was committed to racing other boats in her class courtesy of Tom and the Langstone rowing club. She acquitted herself very well. **ST 1502** was progressed by Carl and the rest of the team getting her ready to go out onto the new pontoons once they were completed **HSL 102** was back on the Heritage Pontoon and was being prepared for the up and coming trip over to Pegasus Bridge along with **MGB 81**. Both boats had all their topsides polished along with all their teak stripped and oiled. They were joined by a new friend in the the flotilla going over to Normandy, she was the **Anti Submarine Attack Boat 27**.

Dghajsa – Wilson Pickett – Pauline P co-opted the help of Jeremy and together they progressed the boat with Pauline concentrating on the paintwork whilst Jeremy sorted out some of the brass strip. **Landing Craft Assault LCA F 8** – Landau UK continued their work on her in the month. The armour plating was progressing as were the engine room fittings and the wide range of deck and hull fittings as they went back in place. **Armed Steam Cutter ASC 26 ‘Falmouth’** – Matt and his teams made more good progress in the month. The planking had been completed and the steamed timbers were moving on very well. **CMB4 Replica** - With the advent of our high-level access and staging we could finally start to address the complex shaping of the stem and fore-foot chock. The teams continued to fit more steamed timbers. This was the month that we managed to put in the full length fairing battens along the sheers just to make sure we were really going in the right direction. John P and Keith carried on infilling the side decks for the deck cleats, the transom log fettling was making progress and the never-ending task of glue clean up continued. This was also another month of Taking off and putting on as the dreaded sheer stringer continued to plague us.

June 2019 – Motor Whaler Danae – She continued in general use as our workboat, the **Dartmouth Gig** came back



to join us and went on display replacing **Dghajsa – Wilson Pickett** – which was taken over by the IBTC Students as part of their boat ‘finishing’ itinerary of their courses. They stripped down the hull, filled in any holes and blemishes and gave her hull a full priming and undercoat with an immaculate top gloss coat ready for Pauline to come back in and do the detailed decorative motifs. **MGB 81, HSL 102 and MASB 27** – All three boats spent time over at Pegasus Bridge commemorating the 75th Anniversary of the D Day landings. The new pontoons were finished in time for the D Day gatherings. **Landing Craft Assault LCA F 8** – Work moved ahead well under the direction of Landau UK. Her engine room had been painted out. Her stern gear including the propeller shafts, Propellers rudders along with all the new through hull fittings ready for the new engines were ready to go in place. **Armed Steam Cutter ASC 26 ‘Falmouth’** – Matt’s team had continued making good progress in the month. All the hull restoration had been finalised. Priming and

internal structure was primed and undercoated. Fitting out was in danger of starting. **CMB4 Replica** Steve D was working on the top of the stem fore-foot, Fay was fairing off timber scarf joints and John P and Keith had made a start on the ‘unmentionables’ later to become known as the ‘U’ brackets for the engine bearer supports. Ian’s Wednesday group fitted a full set of dummy timbers to the forward sections causing the boat to look like a boat. If only they could have stayed there over the next few months. Little did we know then that they would come off and go back on several times before we could resist the urge to glue and nail them no more. **Original CMB4** -The Imperial War Museum had loaned her to the Trust and we took delivery of her this month. It was a chance to crawl all over her and pick up some more important details.

July 2019 – HSL 102, MGB 81 and MASB 27 all returned safely from Normandy and joined **Armed Steam Pinnacle**



199 and ST1502 on the new pontoons. This was the month that saw the replica of **HMS Pickle** arrive and we had the pontoons open to the public. **Dghajsa – Wilson Pickett** – was handed back to Pauline so she could carry on painting the traditional motifs and artwork. **Landing Craft F8** had the first of her engines fitted along with her prop shafts and rudders. **Armed Steam Cutter ASC 26** had more work carried out and a few more small plank graving pieces added to her gunwales. The Trust took delivery of her new steam engine. Do you remember the engine running? If not click on the following link <https://www.facebook.com/662222557286452/videos/402677023719254/>

CMB4 Replica – Although we made no great steps forward this month we did manage to consolidate quite a bit. Work steadily progressed on the fore-foot chock. Whaler John and Steve D glued a shed load of new timber it, Fay continued to clean up the ubiquitous surplus glue and David Y started to make a full set of

deck cleats. Ian P and his team machined up some timber and made up the first dummy plank to plot the shape. **Original CMB4** -following her delivery last month we had spent quite a bit of time getting her to fit the steel frame following which she was lifted and put onto her exhibition steels on the upper mezzanine floor.

August 2019 - Motor Whaler –Danae

- was taken ashore for some minor repairs to her rubbing strakes and deck fittings. **Maltese Dghajsa – Wilson Pickett** – Pauline carried on with some of her decorative panels. Aaron and Dave continued with work on **Armed Steam Cutter ASC 26 ‘Falmouth’** as they nailed up the latest sections of planking along the gunwales. **CMB Replica**, this month was a bit like the curate’s egg, OK in parts, another month of putting on and taking off we finally admitted defeat on the long saga of the sheer stringer transition section and cut them out on both sides and inserted new with enough meat on them to shape them correctly, needless to say, it was a painful decision but one that paid dividends in the end. We all managed to get some more steamed timbers fitted moving the job forward. John B was using a steaming bag and Stella was working on the forward section cleaning up surplus glue along with Fay. Steve D cut and fitted a long dummy plank up forward as he continued to crack the code on the Fore -Foot chock. Donald Harmes a 93year old gent called to see the CMB4 Replica, he had some special memories as when he was 16 he was an apprentice working in the



Drawing Offices of Thornycroft working on the 55 Ft CMB’s.

September 2019 – Pauline was getting on very well with the Maltese Dghajsa – Wilson Pickett

she had managed to paint quite a bit of the wash boards/ sheer planks. We finally managed to open up work on the long -neglected **Cyclops** with the teams giving her a coat of paint below the waterline, David Y started work again on her oar crutches whilst Chris removed some of her forward damaged planks. John S started to make a full set of cleats for her for later. **Motor Whaler Danae** went back in the water but failed her harbour trials due to the ongoing saga of her control cables, (I told you there was more to come) her rudder was damaged and need to be repaired. **Landing Craft Assault LCA F 8** – Landau UK continue with the restoration programme. **Armed Steam Cutter ASC 26 ‘Falmouth’** – Matt’s team made some good progress on Falmouth over the period with the engine bearers going back in for fitting. **CMB 4 Replica** had quite a bit of progress following on from the dummy planks fitted last month we started to mark out and cut the planking rebates and Richard progressed the transom chine logs still further nearing the point of fitting.



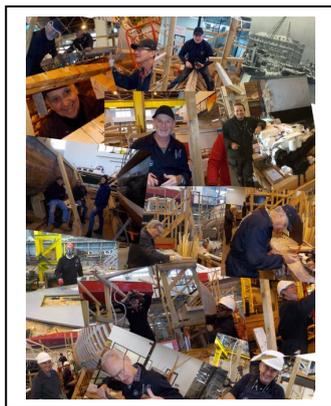
October 2019 - Work on the Maltese Dghajsa – Wilson Pickett

continued by now most of the wash-board motifs were back in place with only her name left to be put onto her starboard side to bring that to completion. **Harbour Launch D49** was finally moved onto the pontoons as funding is being sought for her refit. Work on **Cyclops** was continued with David Y working on the crutches, John S making the cleats and Trevor and John C managed to fit some more of her thwarts. We had an open weekend for the power boats, **HSL 102, ST 1502 and MGB 81, SC 438 and Steam Pinnace 199**. Over this week end we had over 600 visitors altogether over all the boats. Work on **Landing Craft Assault LCA F 8** had reached a very late stage and she was due to go into the dock for wet trials but unfortunately our 20 ton crane took up smoking, not good for something 80 years old. Although Mat had been diverted from this project his guys and gals had made some nice progress, the new inwales were in place, the engine beds were being worked on preparing long bolts etc. and her new risers had been machined ready for shaping. **CMB4 Replica** was again in the process of two forward three back as we had to rework some earlier timbers, we managed

to do this and make progress on the fore-foot chock and the planking rebates along the port side. We had managed to crack the sheer stringer finally and the long -awaited day came when our ‘May work’ was finalised and the deck timbers went in for good. The transom chine logs were fitted along with dry fitting their fairing wedges. Work had started fitting the sheer infils and we cut out some nice big access hole in the body moulds so that we could prime all the inside of the hull. **VIC 56**, our new acquisition arrived in the month adding to our overall ‘steam’ capability.



November 2019 - Both sides of Maltese Dghajsa – Wilson Pickett was very near completion and work was started to make the exhibition base for her once all work is completed. Harbour Launch D49 was left on the pontoons as plans were developed to bring her ashore for a full survey. Work on Cyclops continued with Trevor, John and Fay continuing with the remaining thwarts. **Motor Whaler Danae** had been used to assist **VIC 56** following her little steam around the harbour. The Motor Whaler developed a small problem with her gear-box so she was brought into the dock. **HSL 102, ST 1502 and MGB 81** were all operational but soon were to be prepared for their winter storage. **VIC 56** had a full head of steam and was run around the harbour and was also in steam for the Christmas Festival. **CMB4 Replica** timbering neared completion with the very last section being steamed a dry fitted. The planking rebates over the fore-foot chock were nearing completion as was the sheer infills. **ASR 26 Falmouth** - The risers and engine bearers were put in and bedded down with some more planking repairs being noted and carried out. Work on **Landing Craft Assault LCA F 8** remained on hold pending repair of the 20 ton crane.



Dec 2019 – Harbour Launch D49 was lifted out and put on the slipway, this will allow her to be fully surveyed to give a good steer on potential restoration costs. John C and Trevor made the final thwart for **Cyclops** and John S finished making her cleats. Shiner and Chris worked afloat on **Danae** to get her engine / gear box issues resolved. **ASR 26 Falmouth** we had an update on the build progress of her new boiler which was progressing very well. She now has most of the engine bearer bolts cut and fitted, her forward bulkhead is ready to go back in and the planking is now finalised. **CMB4 Replica** finally had all her steamed timbers in place including all the deck timbers. Work had started on the chine infill sections and most of the sheer infills had been completed. Max finished off making the planking bench so as soon as the starboard rebates are finalised planking can be spiled and got ready for the New Year. The display base for **Maltese Dghajsa – Wilson Pickett** was completed and is ready to be located with Pauline having only two small designs yet to complete.



Let me take this opportunity to thank everyone for their ongoing support of this News Letter I look forward to continuing our story in the coming year as we look towards all the new projects in the pipeline and the hopeful completion of some of our older ones. I wish you all a very Happy and Prosperous New Year.

Suggestions for next month - If you have got any ditties, lies, scandal or photos that you would like to see in print just let me know, my 'e' mail address is: - boatbitsisus@ntlworld.com. Fred is the name.