

Monthly News Letter –

October 2014

Historic Small Craft Section



October has been and gone, the clocks have gone back and dark evenings are with us. Never the less we still had a good month all round with lots of boat work, both large and very small and lots of smiley faces.

**Portsmouth Naval Base
Property Trust**

The Green Parrot –The boat has been progressed slowly in the month dodging the rain and stormy blows. Nevertheless Fred has managed to rub down the after coach roof and fill all of the holes and gaps, He has given it a couple of coats of primer / undercoat. In the photo over left you can see a very rare shot of



him actually working. This photo is courtesy of Paul Hopley one of Fred's 'trainee reporters', and as it happens the owner of a

1944 version of a 45 foot Medium Speed Picket Boat a sister of the Green Parrot named 'Nuthatch'. Paul has been in close contact with us for many years and has been keeping an interested



eye on our proceedings over the years. This month he managed to get down to see us over at Haslar. In the photo above right you can see the result of another of Fred's half day's jolly over to Haslar. He has managed to strip off all of the old varnish from her quarter deck and has given it one thinned coat of new shiny stuff. I think she is starting to look more like the Green Parrot of old. There is still some way to go yet. Just can't wait to get her back home.

Heritage Pontoon repairs – Talking about getting boats back home, we finally got to see the large Baker Trayte floating crane tide up alongside the main pontoon in the month. They

have started the long awaited repairs so hopefully we will soon have a fully operational set of moorings for our boats. For all non believers



amongst you the photo over left is final proof of the progress to date. Fingers crossed they will knock on and finish the beast.

32 Foot Naval Cutter Refit – She has been further progressed in the month and is now back upright on her keel. She has had several coats of new paint and is really looking good. Trevor has made up a cover for her ready for when she goes



back outside in the wind and weather before finally going on display in Boathouse 4 once the developers have

finished in April next year. However before all of that takes place Dave and Whaler John



and Vincent spent many a happy hour on their hands and

knees cleaning out the rest of the flaky paint and general surplus bits. In the photo above right

Dave S is at his place of duty taking a breather between wearing out the last of his good knees and bottom left of previous column Vincent is just finishing off at the blunt end. The next and final stage of this refit is to make up a set of chocks to fit the Oar sockets to set up some Spanish windlasses across the beam to pull her gently back into shape and to give her additional support during the months outside until she has a proper cradle made. Watch future editions on this boat as we move forward.

Training Programme – The crew training programme has taken a bit of a hit this month due to the adverse weather not playing ball with our training days.

ST 1502 Coding Programme – ‘Clankies’ Shiner and Tony along with ‘Leckies’ Chris and Eddie have made a start on the coding programme but the majority of the work is now held pending release of funding for the material necessary to bring her up to full compliance.

Motor Whaler Danae – Other than some minor ongoing prep work by Ricky on her rubbing strakes work has virtually been on hold this month due to other priorities and a touch of dodgy weather.

Community Activity Days – As I said last month we had been converting a lot of scrap and recycled timber into ‘Mini Boat’ bits in preparation for our planned Community Activity Days. These took place on Saturday and Sunday 25th and 26th October.



Marian had arranged for a rope making display to be available from Chatham Dockyard. We

had our ‘Build a Boat’ work bench in place with three workstations and a ‘Make a Crab Claw Cramp’ bench in place for the two days. In addition there was a wood working bench and a display of traditional shipwright’s tools and of course our very own Mr Knotty with his crowd pulling demos and slick chat up lines. All we needed then was to get the visitors in and let them loose. Over the two days they did come in their droves all ages eager to have a go. At the bottom of the previous column you can see Fran supervising the mini boat bench with Mums, Dads, Granddads, Nans, boys and girls of all ages keen to get their eye in. Over left we have one of our keen visitors concentrating in earnest



to get the cut of the jib just right and over right Whaler John with two of the newly qualified



‘Shipwrights’ along with their prides and joy, these two had come over from Germany and were

determined to set the bench mark high. Shiner and Tiger were deployed looking after the rope making set up supervising the day’s activities. Over left you can see their machine in operation.



Above right at the top of the next column we have a photo of one of our visitors working with Fred making a

‘Fiddler Crab Claw Clamp’, here she is drilling the pilot hole to take the nails for riveting. Finally in the photo below left you can see the mini fleet ‘all at sea’ as a large number of Saturday’s constructions are held for their young owners to return after their visit to the Dockyard. All in all it was a very successful event with the best part of sixty mini boats being made and dozens of yards of rope being turned out,



most of which ended up being spliced by xxxxxxx the Warrior’s sail maker. I cannot mention everyone by name for which I

apologise as it would be wrong of me to try and then miss someone out, so to one and all thank you for an excellent few days. Having said that I think I should give Brian Lee a special mention that having come back off fairly long term sick he is now getting more mobile and he spent one day on his feet in front of a router table making a noise and lots of sawdust cutting ‘crab claw’ clamp bits

HSL 102 – Tiger has been carrying on working on her decks in the month as and when the weather allowed and in between doing some modifications to Nat’s Exhibition Trailer.

Islander Class 14 Ft, Wanderer - Robert of Nottingham has been kept busy this month re-vernishing 'Wanderer'. She is looking to be very special and getting lots of admiring comments from



our Visitors. Above left and right Robert is at full speed working on her rudder and over left you can see the culmination of his endeavours this month's.

FMD Dainty – This boat has moved on in the month by virtue of Chris H, Shiner, Fred and in no small way Ricky. She has been rubbed down several times now with lots of intermediate filling and fairing prior to priming and undercoating. Fred and Ricky had a go at setting up her hull so that her waterline could be scribed accurately.



Above right Ricky is setting up the hull horizontal in both planes. They thought that it would be a good exercise to use the old 'Water in a hose pipe'

method, 'cos we all know that water will always find its own level and no matter what you do with the hose pipe between the two ends the water level will be the same at each end. Above right Ricky is checking his end of the pipe as Fred tops it up at the other. The theory is that once filled to the correct level, Ricky then just walks around the boat marking off the water level at his end on the boat and 'hey presto' you have a perfect waterline!!!!!!.



What they don't tell you is that you have to watch out for airlocks or you are in danger of defying the laws of physics and it is case of a judicious 'suck and blow' and if you are not careful you can experience a severe case of the 'Water Boarding' torture. Watch this space for future developments once they have dried up all of the spilled water and dried out their shoes and socks. Above right shows the boat after a lot of fairing and a couple of coats of undercoat. Her final coat will be Arctic Blue as donated by the Dainty Association.



Ariadne Restoration Programme – Work on Ariadne is now in full flow and has been attracting a full complement of volunteers. In the following photos you can see Tony H, Dave R and Eddie getting to grips with some of her filling, fairing and fettling. Also guilty in the month are Eddie, John

P, Bob K and Fred. Apologies for any I have missed or not shown photos of them in full flow.



Donations – In the month of October we collected £496.68 in donations from visitors to Boat House 5, many thanks to all of our visitors and supporters. As in previous months all donations go towards the Small Boat maintenance funds.

Any 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.