

British Military Powerboat Trust

Husbands Shipyard, Cracknore Hard Lane, Marchwood SO40 4ZD

Newsletter March 2005.

This first 2005 newsletter is a very late offering this year, and we apologise profusely. Your Executive Committee has been working tirelessly, to achieve a satisfactory resolution to the seemingly impossible task of relocating the Trust, in its entirety, to a new venue. The enormity of the task is realised, when the size of the infrastructure required to house the collection as a whole, is considered.

We needed to find a place with the same size parameters as we have at Marchwood, as well as having access to the waterside. We had to have in place suitable financial resources, to allow us to pay for the entire removal. At the same time, we have had to work within an ever-shrinking time frame, in which the Trust "hits the buffers" on September 30th this year. There is no flexibility with this date.

The reality of our situation is that, on that date, we have to be somewhere else.

At the last AGM, the fascinating scenario painted by Mr Steven Walters, from World of Boats, lifted our spirits. The future with our boats as a collection, being housed in a purpose built Museum at Poole, seemed an ideal solution to our relocation problem. Our Chairman has been working tirelessly to achieve some sort of finality with regard to the Poole project, amongst many other leads, including Gosport and Calshot. The Poole site is still very much in the frame, but no final decision has yet been achieved in writing.

We are however told that the ever-moving goal posts on our ever-changing playing field are showing signs of being set in their final position, in particular with regard to the Poole project.

Mr Walters, again visited us at the invitation of our Chairman and the EC, and very kindly put the Poole picture very plainly before us. The infinite variety of plans and counter-plans normally involved in a project of this enormity, seem to be lining up in an orderly fashion.

In 3 years time, a waterborne facility could be available to the Trust boats. A year or two further down the line the Maritime centre of excellence could be a reality.

It was with this 5-year bridging gap in mind, that we set about forming a realistic plan to achieve our aims, with Poole our priority.

The plan was quite simple :-

- To move the entire collection from Husbands shipyard to a hard standing at Poole, for an approximate 5 year period.
- To move the collection away from the hard stand, whilst the centre of Excellence was being built.
- To move the collection into the new Museum.

The reality of this plan was also quite simple :-

- We needed a considerable amount of money available in the bank to cover all the moves and operational requirements of storing and control.
- We needed to be able to protect the boats in the open for the time period.
- We needed staff members to attend to all that this plan entailed.

The imposition of the solution however soon started to show signs of impracticality :-

- ✓ Would the collection survive the period of exposure?
- ✓ How would the venture be financed, in particular the 3 moves?
- ✓ Who would be responsible for the safety and management of the collection in the meantime?

To answer the questions, we decided to examine the collection very carefully, to establish the ownership, restorability and the viability of moving each boat. This proved to be a difficult task, as the files in the Trust's possession are scant and in some cases non-existent, regarding boat origination and ownership.

In order that you may follow our thoughts in this regard, we list the boats and the actions taken which we consider suitable under the circumstances, in no particular order. Please note that all decisions have been taken after many long deliberations at EC meetings, and any actions have been taken in accordance with the Trust Constitution paragraph D "Powers." (of the EC) sub para (ii)(iii) and (ix)

ROSIE.

A 25 foot fast motor launch.

Apparently donated to the Trust.

No paperwork available.

In considerable state of disrepair, and not considered restorable.

No chance of surviving a long outdoor stay.

Not considered financially viable to move to Poole or anywhere else.

After much legwork, the original donor was found, and offered the boat back.

The owner agreed to take the boat and has subsequently removed it.

Cost to the Trust £25.00

TARGET

A 35 foot fast motor boat.

Apparently donated to the Trust.

No paperwork available.

In a considerable state of disrepair, and considered restorable at a huge cost.

No chance of surviving a long outdoor stay.

Not considered financially viable to move to Poole.

Offered on e-bay under boats and classic boats, but no takers.

An arrangement has been reached for her to go to a private owner, at no cost to the Trust.

HSL 142

Donated to the Trust.

Paperwork available.

In a total state of disrepair. Her back appears to be broken, and lifting her will be dangerous.

The owner has been offered to take her back, and will advise the Trust by the end of March if he wants her.

Little chance of her being safely moved.

Not considered financially viable to move.

If the owner does not want her she will be broken up on site.

Cost to the Trust £25.00.

RSL 1664

Donated to the Trust.

Paperwork available.

In a state of disrepair, as a result of having been used by the Army for damage repair training, and a long stay outside.

This boat was a major headache for us.

We seriously considered a move for her, but the cost involved and the viability of her survival for a further five years outside was not considered possible.

As we have 2 Trust Members who have RSL1643 in an operational state and on the water, we decided that RSL1664 should be offered to RSL1643 for spares, and in return RSL1643 will be available to the Trust for use at events, when appropriate. This process was started recently, and RSL 1664 will be broken up for spares for RSL 1643. The prospective owner of RSL1651 (Thanks to Phil Simons) has approached us and we will help him as well if at all possible, with spares.

QUEEN GILL.

Bought by the Trust for £2,500.00.

Paperwork available.

In excellent state of repair, but completely out of original design form.

This boat had apparently been loaned to someone for a show.

She had been put on the water and promptly sank.

She was returned to the Trust, where someone else took the engine away for repairs.

There is no paperwork for any of this, and the boat is therefore sans engine.

The person holding the engine was found.

The removal of this boat to Poole was considered, but her survival possibilities were considered to be unfavourable.

The possibility of housing her with Trust Members "at home" was considered, but this would create legal problems, as well as placing long-term financial and responsibility burdens upon the Trust.

As she had come from the "Classic Motor Boat Association" in the first instance, and as she is in the guise of a CMBA boat, we decided to approach the CMBA with a view to selling her.

It turns out that a CMBA member would like to purchase her, and we discovered that another CMBA member had the engine.

It was decided therefore that we would sell the boat, and an arrangement between the two CMBA Members re the separate boat and engine, would be worked out between themselves.

We were offered and accepted £1,000.00 for the boat, sans engine, and on her own road trailer.

She will be available to the Trust for show events, and the Trust has been accepted as a Corporate Member of the CMBA, and will appear at their shows, with our own boats.

16 FOOT SKIMMER.

Apparently donated to the Trust.

No paperwork available.

In very poor condition, with broken back and rotten underwater hull.

No chance of surviving a long outdoor storage.

Not considered financially viable to move her to Poole or any other place.

Broken up on site.

Cost to the Trust £25.00.

E-BOAT S130.

This boat was brought to the Trust by a Member, for restoration by Powerboat Restorations.

The owner was unable to proceed with the restoration.

The boat was virtually abandoned on the tidal mud berth and for a long while deteriorated.

Our Chairman eventually persuaded the owner to transfer ownership to the Trust, at no cost, as we needed to do something about her.

We then set about stabilising her further deterioration, caused by ingress of water at each tide through open sea valves, and hull damage.

The boat was slipped and repaired sufficiently to be towed to Plymouth where she has been hauled out of the water onto a slipway at Mashfords.

Mashfords is part of a group which includes World of Boats.

One reason for this arrangement was that it had been indicated to us that a film/TV company would like to rebuild her for use in a series covering the Coastal Forces at war.

Nothing has come of this as yet, although the intention is still apparently there.

The recovery operation cost the Trust £14,001.95, and it is hoped to recover some of this outlay, should the project proceed.

World of Boats have shown interest in acquiring this boat.

The Imperial War Museum has also expressed an interest in this boat, and our Chairman is proceeding to negotiate at this time.

MTB331

Ceded to the Trust by Hampshire County Council (HCC)

Paperwork available.

A restorable hull.

We have been offered a home by World of Boats for eventual use at the Poole Museum facility.

She has been offered to World of Boats with the proviso that they take on her care and maintenance as well as the financial and managerial responsibilities involved.

They will also be responsible for the application to Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for restoration grant money.

The Trust has been kindly offered financial assistance for a move, by HCC.

HCC will have to approve of any proposed move as well as a new owner.

She has been prepared in all respects for a move.

The IWM seem mildly interested in this boat.

Our Chairman is proceeding with the offer at this time.

We are desperately trying to keep this boat together with S130 and MTB71, as a group.

Cost to the Trust £100.00.

MTB71

Ceded to the Trust by Hampshire County Council (HCC)

Paperwork available.

A restorable hull, to static display standard.

We have been offered a home by World of Boats for eventual display at the Poole Museum facility.

She has been offered to World of Boats with the proviso that they take on her care and maintenance as well as the financial and managerial responsibilities involved.

She has also been offered to the Imperial War Museum (IWM) for display at Duxford.

The Trust has been kindly offered financial assistance for the move, by HCC.

HCC will have to approve of any proposed move as well as a new owner.

She has been prepared in all respects for a move, and a Trust expenditure of £1,000.00 has been made to fit her with wheels of her own.

Our Chairman is proceeding with both offers at this time.

We are desperately trying to keep this boat with S130 and MTB331 together.

Cost to the Trust £1,000.00.

GUS (Stainless steel German Army work boat)

Apparently belongs to the Trust.

Little paperwork available.

A restorable hull to static display standard.

Would survive an outside storage period.

Not considered financially viable to move.

This boat has been offered to numerous Army Museums, but we have no takers as yet.

Peter Baillie continues to find her a home.

RASC HUMBER

This boat is apparently on loan to the Trust.

No paperwork available.

We have managed to establish a probable "owner" within Marchwood, and we are pursuing this now.

If it is MoD property then it will have to be returned to the base.

If it becomes available to us as an owned item, we have a prospective home for her. (Thanks to Phil Simons and David Fricker)

She could survive storage outside if shrink-wrapped; cost about £350.00.

It is not financially viable for the Trust to move her anywhere.

There are no funds available to continue her presence within the Trust .

Option left open to offer her for sale.

If no home can be found we will have no option but to break her up on site.

ST1502

Owned by the Trust.

Paperwork available.

Under full restoration.

Launching May 30th 2005.

The local Volunteer group, under the BMPT management, in the Southampton area will retain this boat, until the World of Boats, Poole Museum is ready.

Our Landlords have kindly agreed to her using the outside pontoon berth at Marchwood until the 30th September.

This boat has been restored by generous donations, and has her own restoration bank account.

We have prepared a yard trailer for her, for the winter months.

A decision will be made re her winter sojourn in due course.

FMBARK ROYAL (ex aircraft carrier HMS Ark Royal #4)

Owned by the Trust.

Paperwork available.

Under full restoration, thanks to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) funding.

She has her own restoration bank account.

Launching May 30th 2005.

The local volunteer group, under the BMPT management, in the Southampton area will retain this boat, until the World of Boats, Poole Museum is ready.

We have had a trailer made for her, to allow full road transportation.

A decision will be made re her winter sojourn, in due course.

FMD DAINTY (ex daring class destroyer HMS Dainty.)

Owned by the Trust.

Paperwork available.

Under full restoration. BMPT funded.

Launching May 30th 2005.

The local volunteer group, under the BMPT management, in the Southampton area will retain this boat, until the World of Boats, Poole Museum is ready.

We have had a trailer made for her, to allow full road transportation.

A decision will be made re her winter sojourn, in due course.

All of our “borrowed” display items such as engines and models have been returned to their respective owners. These items could be made available to the Trust should they be required in the future.

As you will observe from the report, the financial implications of moving the entire collection are far beyond our modest means. We estimate that to move each large boat once will cost £2,000.00. We had therefore to make a decision, either to spend vast sums of money on moving boats which would in all probability end up as “write offs” after many years open storage, or to save our available funds, and direct them toward maintaining and managing the 3 boats which we intend to launch in May. At the same time, we are funding within reason, any boats, which can go to good homes.

Having thus examined the situation carefully the questions originally asked were answered:-

- ❖ We do not have sufficient funding to move the entire collection.
- ❖ We would be unable to afford suitable protection for the collection whilst in open store.

- ❖ We do not have manpower, neither can we afford to hire such staff, to manage the boats whilst in open store.

We hope that you will see our dilemma, and agree with our very difficult decisions made.

Our tenure in the shed comes to an abrupt end in about 7 months time. The shed itself has suffered gale damage over the winter, and we have been instructed by our Landlords that we are not to effect repairs of any kind to the structure, as this could well be a dangerous pursuit. Furthermore, the definition of our occupation has been re-classified as for storage purpose, with maintenance to stored items being permitted. This means that the boats may be stored, and worked on, which will see the 3 under restoration, completed.

As a direct result of the shed condition, we have decided not to advertise as being open to the public this summer. The boat numbers will be reducing and the various items returned to owners. Those members of the public, who do arrive, will be offered a reduced tour of the remaining boats. Members are of course always welcome, but should 'phone one of the numbers listed at the end of this letter, to make sure you can get in.

It is with great sadness that we report the passing over the side, of our Shopkeeper, Malcolm Bearman. Malcolm had made a fantastic job of preparing the new shop, painting and setting up shelving. He had also ordered stock, which sold well over last summer. We will miss him greatly.

No volunteers could be found to replace Malcolm, so we have closed down the shop, and sold the remaining stock at prices which allowed a good income for the Trust. Thank you Malcolm for your fine efforts on behalf of the Trust. We will remember him.

Dunkirk Little Ships continue to occupy a section of the shed, and thanks to our own Jimmy Nunn, much progress is being made on Lucy Lavers. The Isle of Scomer, situated in the yard, is on e-bay for sale, but has found no bidders. She will have to be broken up if no bidders are found for her.

Work on Arkian has come to a halt at the moment, whilst further negotiations are entered into with Mr Primmer, our resident chippy.

We have given DKLS notice to be away from the site by 26th August 2005.

Mr D Primmer occupies the workshop storing his equipment. This is on a rent-free basis, which allows the trust to maintain the equipment from time to time. Mr Primmer has been given notice to be away from the site by 26th August 2005.

A boat making company, CML, use the old boiler shop to store boats. We receive a generous donation, for which we are very grateful. We have given them notice to be away from the site by 30th September 2005.

The rest of the shed, about two thirds, is occupied by the Trust. We will try and find more storage items, for both inside as well as outside, which may result in our receiving further donations to our cause.

Outside, Forrest Transport continue to occupy a portion of our site, for which they pay us a monthly fee. We have given Forrest Transport notice to vacate the site by 30th September 2005..

Our Landlords kindly make the Trust a donation to occupy a small portion of the site, which is of no use to the Trust. As we are not open to the public, we hope that you will agree that these donations are a very necessary means of fund raising. After September 30th, all this income will cease, hence we

are trying to muster as much in the way of finance as we can, whilst we can, to cover the boats remaining with us here in Southampton.

We are in the process of investigating options locally to accommodate our three boats as well as a portacabin. We have moved the office in its entirety, into the portacabin, to get used to the "close" working conditions.

It is intended to hold a Special General Meeting on the morning of May 30th to discuss the way forward, and the forming of BMPT Ltd. This is required to protect the Trustees financially, amongst other things.

We will also be launching the 3 boats that afternoon. The venue for this days functions has yet to be decided, and you will be advised in due course, of that venue.

May we close by thanking you for your patience in waiting for this newsletter. So much changes so often now that we are approaching the end at Marchwood. It is sometimes difficult to see the wood for the trees, but thank you anyway, we value your membership and support, as well as any remarks, comments or suggestions you may have regarding our actions, through these very difficult times.

Available for you to contact are :-

The Chairman, Charles du Cane is on
Vice Chairman, Peter Baillie is on

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PS. Please visit our web site and Forum on www.bmpt.org.uk