

## Monthly News Letter –

July 2015

### Historic Small Craft Section



**A busy month what with locating boats into BH4, escorting the America's Cup teams to sea, getting to grips with D49 and sorting out the bits and bobs in Boathouse 5 that will not be moving into our new home.**

**Portsmouth Naval Base  
Property Trust**

**The Green Parrot** – Following the work carried out in the previous months she was virtually up to her old standard looking very smart and tiddly. She took part in the parade of sail for the America's Cup racing fleet in the month. Over right and below left she is under way on the



Thursday one of the two good days. These photographs are courtesy of Brian Lee who was on board HSL 102 also

accompanying the fleet. [Click here to buy or view online](#) NB Not sure about the 'Buy' bit but the 'View' is good value. This link shows an excellent shot of the Green Parrot with some of the racing fleet inside Portsmouth Harbour on the Friday. If you get to see it the guy hanging off the transom of the GP is Tiger standing in for Fred.

**ST 1502** – She is taking root over in Gosport. Most of the work has been done but there was a minor glitch with the first of the replacement engines not being in accordance with the spec. It has been removed again to have it brought up to standard. The good news is that it fitted perfectly and dropped straight down onto the mounts.

**HSL 102**– The boat also took part in the parades of sail with the America's cup racing boats competing with the Ben Ainsley Racing team. The event was over four days with the racing teams having two days of trials followed by two

days of high performance racing. Unfortunately the fourth day was cancelled due to very stormy conditions. In the photo at the bottom left of the previous column we can see Sadie and



Fran in the foreground enjoying the trip out. In the background there is one dodgy looking individual with either a pirates patch over one eye or he is wearing a very large pair of designer 'sunnies'. This brings about a small competition, Can anyone identify this individual. There will be a 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> prize issued. The 1<sup>st</sup> prize will be free copies of the News Letter for the next three months. 2<sup>nd</sup> prize will be free copies of the News



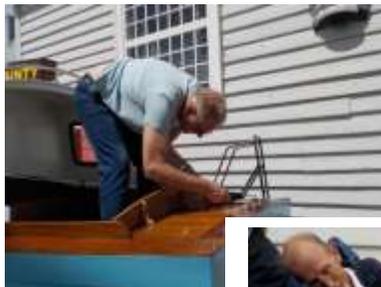
Letter for the next six months. Good luck. Just to give you some idea of the racing boats in action I have, shown an image of the

one of the boats in action. I am not really sure why I have shown the French boat, obviously the BAR British Team was too far in front to be photographed.

**FMD Dainty** –Work progressed further in the month. She is now outside of the Boathouse along with all of the other boats waiting in line for their call up



into Boathouse 4. This didn't stop our volunteers, come sun or sun they were out in it busy working. Over left you can see Trevor D fitting some stainless steel window guards. At the top of the next column Dave C (who despite having promised us all weekly that he was leaving us to go the South



Wales) persists in coming in and working on boats. Here he is fitting some



small knees supporting the back board on Dainty. Below right Terry is carrying some Quality Control checks on some

of Fred's upholstery. Fred had taken it into his head to do something different this time. Below left he is there in person getting in front of the camera. Just checking out the fit before the boat was taken away to the Henley Classic Boat Exhibition.

### Fairey Huntress

– Ricky had finished painting the inside of her hull and then Jack got to grips on her blue hull.



A bit later on Fred and Trevor D painted her waterline with the additional guidance and advice of Whaler John. Once the lining had been detailed to all of their satisfaction the anti-fouling was put on so that she was ready to go into Boathouse 4 on the upper mezzanine floor. In the photo at the bottom of the previous column you can see the outcome of their judicious taping, it is so sharp it looks like it was traced with a laser. In the next sequence of photos you can see the results of several days trying to knit with frogs as Gill described the process of getting into a crane and driving it in the new Boathouse 4. Over left



the Huntress is on her way up to the new mezzanine exhibition area whilst below right she is



located next to 'Osborne' the steam cutter. All in all the lift went fairly well once we had hold of the refurbished 5 ton crane, but more about that shortly.

**Commissioning the 5 Ton Crane** – This is the crane in number one bay in Boathouse 4. It has been out of commission for the past 20 years or so but as part of the development programme it was re-commissioned. This came down to our intrepid duo Terry and Fred our two crane drivers. In the next sequence of photos the two of them are seen at play with their newish toy. However before they got to this stage it was necessary go through a fairly extensive sequence

of hoops all with their own little setbacks. Hence Gill's description 'Knitting with Frogs'. Below left Terry is finally in the driver's seat along with Fred



who has the camera, only to find that we had beaten the electricity up the ladder and it hadn't actually arrived in time for the big event. Not to be put off the following day arrived and they were both enticed back up into the crane with a firm promise that this time the 'electric' had

been given clear guidelines on how to get past all of the switches and isolators to get into the

control box. Over right the beast is moving under the control of a Property Trust bod for the first



time in over twenty years. Over left Fred is all kitted out and ready to go with his harness and all of the safety gear in place. It was at this point that he started speaking in a high pitched voice and walking like someone

from the 'Ministry of Funny Walks' but the harness has to be tight just in case he dropped off the gantry 40 feet up. The thought fair makes your eyes water.

**Exhibition Boat Building Project** – This month brought the project to its final stages as Phoenix was lifted onto the mezzanine exhibition floor. In this sequence of photos Phoenix flies with the greatest of ease. Below left she is on the forks of the big man's fork lift follow by her in mid flight. Below left she has just been taken off the



forks and is



being lowered onto the floor



Over right Phoenix is nearing her final resting place

with several relieved bods standing watching breathing a sigh of relief. Not the least of these was Mark B who had started to think that no boats would ever get up onto the floor. Finally over left she is in place along with her two sets of



dummy oars and a swivel gun on her starboard bow. All in all this has been an excellent project for everyone that has been involved.

**MGB 81** – Since her return from Normandy last month she has had a fair bit of work carried out in the fuel tank department. All fuel the tank baffles have been refitted as some had become detached over the years. In the photo over left Tiger is busy resting in one of the tanks, photos courtesy of Sadie. No, I am not sure which way is up either. At least with the baffles in place there will be less sloshing about with a ton of diesel on board when she is at sea.



**Harbour Launch D49** – A lot of us have been busy on D49 in this period. She is nearing the completion of her upper works paint job. Danny has been taking the lead getting lots of guys and gals organised. In the next sequence of photos some of the work can be seen as it progresses. Over left you can see Fisherman



Pete in Nimbus fitting her pennant number onto her bow. Over right Danny is at the right hand side



of the photo with Knotty Tony and Fisherman Pete down aft working on the steering lines. The rudder had become quite tight over the months and the choice was to send Danny on a 'Mr Universe' course or get it sorted out. In the photos below the side steering sheave blocks are being removed so that the sheaves can be serviced. Alan B (2)



and Richard H are responsible for the pile of

rubble on the deck but at least we can now fit new blocks along with fully serviceable pullies. Unfortunately nothing on old boats is that simple so in the next photos we are busy attacking transom and all things 'aft' as



we try to sort out any new problems that we have revealed along the way. Above right Knotty Tony has taken the 'big man's hammer' and is

busy trying to miss his knees and anything else

that he values as he drives out the rusted bolts holding the Port quarter knee in place. In the last photo at the bottom of the previous column are the result of his efforts, four rusty bolts out and four more to go. Watch this space next month for the story of D49.

**Boathouse 4/5 Movements-** As I said in some of the earlier articles there has been quite a bit of movement of the boats into their display locations in Boat House 4. The first one to move was Phoenix which I have already covered. Next was Queen Victoria's Steam Pinnace 'Osborne'. She is a very precious boat and totally unique so a great deal of planning went into her move to make sure that the lift was safe. The first thing to do was to weigh her and confirm her weight to make certain that she was below 5 tonnes, the safe working load of the crane. This done the move was on, below show some of the stages of lifting her onto the Mezzanine floor. Below left



she is on her way from her storage place in the B/H4. Below right all lifting gear in place and she is



on her way. At this stage we still weren't sure if



she would fit over the folded guard rail so this was a trial lift to check the clearance. Not

quite enough so back down again and we fitted shorter strops to the frame and then all systems go, and hey presto here she comes up and over and finally



all tucked up safe and sound in her new home. Following on from Osborne was the Huntress, already covered and then the Surf boat. Two other boats have also been put in position, the Teak Cutter and the Three in One whaler 'Acute'. A point of interest in the last photo above, in the top right hand corner you can see a cannon apparently defying gravity, this is part of the Cutter display showing how the Royal Navy used to transport cannon from ship to shore by slinging them below the keels and rowing ashore. Photos of the cutter and Acute will follow next month.

**Green Parrot's Older Sister - H.M.S. Nuthatch.-** 44320 HMS Nuthatch is a John Thornycroft design Medium Speed Picket Boat (MSPB) of about 1942, built by the British Power Boat Company in Southampton in 1944 (hence the prefix '44'), delivered in November 1945 and allocated to Plymouth Boat Pool III. In December 1946 she was in Special Military Branch Acquaint (SMBA) and was commissioned as HMS Nuthatch of the



Nominal Depot Ship for Royal Naval Air Station Anthorn (RNAS). Towards the end of 1946 her duties were that of ferrying high-ranking officers of the Chief of Staff around Devonport Dock yard, in 1947 she came under the control of the Maintenance Commander of the Dockyard, then in 1948 she was allocated to the Royal Naval Barracks at Devonport.

One of her biggest duties was to be fitted out as an Admirals Barge for the Chief of Staff in 1950. Her duties continued up until 1958 when she was taken into the Devonport Naval Dockyard Port Auxiliary Service Account for accounting purposes only and moored at Mount Wise for Staff Officer's use and was manned by Royal Naval Personnel and not civilian crew. In 1969 she was refitted in Devonport Naval Dockyard Boathouse in the South Yard. In 1970 she was re-engined with twin Gardner 6LWs and was not sold off until May 1982.

She is currently owned by Paul Hopley a long term associate of the Property Trust who has been tracking the ongoing work on the Green



Parrot for quite a few years. He first introduced himself to us via Brian Patterson. Paul took Nuthatch over to Dunkirk this year for the

75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Dunkirk evacuation. In the photo above left and over right she is tied up alongside in



Ramsgate before travelling over to Dunkirk. In the bottom photo Nuthatch is just to the right of centre. Although her wheelhouse is quite different to the Green Parrot's her hull shape is quite unmistakable.

The photographs and boat's details are courtesy of Paul and we look forward to our continuing association.

**Research Project** – I have attached a link below to give you an opportunity of reading about Neil Bartram's research project. If anyone would like to contact Neil for further information I am sure he would welcome the opportunity to liaise with you at his address [neil.bertram2@gmail.com](mailto:neil.bertram2@gmail.com). The link to his project work is as follows <http://porttowns.port.ac.uk/boathouse-4/>.

**Boathouse 5- The next phase-** Having moved most of the boats out of the Boathouse it has made room for part of the next phase. The IBTC course students that started in April are now into the next stage of their course. They have been busy lofting the lines off the Dartmouth Gig with



the view of building a new one from scratch. In the photos over and below some of this activity can

be seen. Above left the guys have set up the boat on a frame and are taking off fine measurements



which they have plotted onto large boards pinned to the floor to produce a set of lines. In the photo at the bottom of the previous column the plotted lines are being checked with a fairing batten.

In the meantime Ricky and Jack had been making some of the display boat chocks out of large section timbers. Over right Ricky is seen at work hacking away some of the



waste timber. And over left he has the chock on the floor thinking that somehow 'this just doesn't adze up'. Ricky

and Jack were not on their own doing these chocks some of the volunteers also got coerced into helping with Trevor D and David 'Boyoh' C. Over right Dave C looks to be making a rather attractive bit of sculpture. It does look quite elegant doesn't it?



**Apologies** – Here I offer my sincere apologies to any of the volunteers that have been involved in any of the projects that I have failed to mention. I am sure that there must be many.

**Any Suggestions for next month** - If you have got any corrections, additions, 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](mailto:boatbitsisus@ntlworld.com). Fred is the name.