



BASINGSTOKE MODEL BOAT CLUB

Newsletter

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In the last Newsletter I questioned where does the time disappear to and that It doesn't seem so long ago that I was compiling the last newsletter and now it is time again for the September 2016 edition of your favourite read. Time again is against me – newsletter to print and distribute, gardening duties, model boats to build, wash our motorhome and then we have to have the grandchildren comes and stay for a few days – no, retirement doesn't means an easier life and lots of leisure time !

Membership News:

As you know we started a new year in the Club from April this year and it has been another good time for new members joining our Club. To date we have had 11 new members that, following receipt of their membership application, joined our Club since April and I have sent a letter of thanks to them for joining us and giving them a warm welcome.

So, in this Newsletter we must formally welcome Steve Harwood and Derek Robson, Colin Clarke and Keith Barnes to our midst and we hope to see them in regular attendance at the pond. Steve comes from the same 'stable' as our Joe Harwood – Joe's son in fact and you may have seen Steve at the pond side for some time but now we have captured him as a member. Keith needs no introduction as most of us already know him down at the pond.

Since the beginning of this new year we have had 14 new members join our Club which is great news and if most of last year's members had renewed their subscriptions we would have 64 members in the Club which I believe to be the highest in its history or for some time.

Annual Membership fees Due for year 2016/2017

In the last Newsletter I reminded all our members that the annual membership fees for the year 2016/2017 were due and what a fantastic response I have had from many of you. To date I have received about 56 membership subscriptions which includes new memberships, which is great and a welcome improvement on previous years. Our membership 'on the books' has now risen to 64 but 5 of those, despite me keep asking for their subscriptions have not replied or have failed to contact me which means we effectively now have at present 59 paid up members. I have now decided to write those 5 members off our books.

We have held the membership fee at £10 this year and £5 for juniors under the age of 16 years and I am sure you will agree that this is excellent value as the membership has to cover the cost of Club insurance, 4 Club Newsletters each year and Internet web hosting costs for our Club web site, etc. So, we hope that you will all continue to support the club in the year ahead and enjoy the benefits of a friendly and expanding membership, complimentary Public Indemnity Insurance and use of the best model boat pond in the area !

New members are most welcome – if you have a friend that may be interested in model boating or joining the club then please let them know all about us, or tell them to have a look at our website to see for themselves - www.basingstokembc.co.uk

Alan Spooner
Hathaway, Stratford Road,
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We have 'lost' another couple of our old members for this year and one is **Dennis Moore** who lives just down the road from our pond. Dennis has been a member for some years but due to him suffering from severe episodes of vertigo he has reluctantly had to tell me he won't be renewing his membership and this is what he wrote:-

"As much as I would like to stay a member of the club, I regret that due to my medical condition I will be unable to continue sailing. I do not want to end up launching myself into the ponds and have to have someone 'fish' me out. Plus the fact it's a long walk to get back home all soggy.

I would like to thank all the club members for their help and advice during my comparatively short period of membership. I wish the club every success for the future. No doubt I will be walking in Eastrop at some time.

If anybody is interested I will be selling my two boats –

1. 'Atlantic' tug. two new motors recently fitted. Brand new 2.4Ghz controller.
2. 'Powerboat' with two motors, propeller steering, two batteries and some odds and sods.

Best wishes

Dennis"

I wrote back:-

"Hi Dennis

Many thanks for letting me know of your decision. I wish you all the best for the future and would be only too pleased to see you down at the pond for a chat.

Thank you for your support in the past as a Club member and would add that we have all missed you. I will ask Andy to update your boats for sale on our website."

Graham Woodhams

Another member we have 'lost' this year is Graham Woodhams. Graham had only been a member for a short time and sent me the following:-

"Good afternoon Alan

Firstly let me apologise for not contacting you sooner. As you will have been aware I have not been to the pond for quite a long time and, due to my numerous other commitments, I do not see me getting time to 'play' anytime in the near future. With this in mind I will let my membership lapse.

I hope that sometime in the future I will be able to get back into my modelling, and if so I will come and find you all and renew my membership.

I wish the club all the very best for the future and may you continue to go from strength to strength. Also, can I take this opportunity to thank you, and all the members, for the friendship and welcome I always received when I did manage to make it to the pond.

All the very best

Graham Woodhams"

I replied – "Graham, Many thanks for letting me know. You know where you can find us if things change for you. Thank you for your past support as a Club member.

Regards Alan Spooner"

General News:

BMBC Events at Eastrop Park

"Love Parks Week" (A National event sponsored by the Keep Britain Tidy group)

This year we again agreed with Basingstoke and Deane Council to support this event and to provide an activity for the children and members of the public. The event was publicised on the Council website and noticeboards. The event took place on Wednesday 26 July where we had a Club stand displaying our boats, tables to make our famous paper boats. A few of us arrived early to set up gazebos, tables, signage etc. and to put some of our boats on display. A quick meet with Zoe Channon, the Council Green Spaces officer, who supplied the paper boat copies, scissors and glue and we were ready for the off.

We had a good support from our members on the day with many attending with their boats, talking to the visitors and children and letting some of them sail their boats under supervision. The weather was overcast but warm with a few quick sharp showers thrown in yet plenty of families visited us to make paper boats and look at the boats on display. I am not sure how many boats we actually made on the day but all the children were pleased with their own efforts especially when they sailed them on the water - some even managed to sail their treasured boats the whole length of our pond. I am not sure that there was as good attendance as last year but our reward was when one of the parents said to me " It was so good of the model boat club members to give up their time to provide this event for the children, they have really enjoyed making and sailing their boats."



Queuing to make paper boats



Joe Harwood, me and Zoe Channon at the end of a busy day

My thanks go to Andy Clark (Chairman), Joe Harwood, Reg Rees, Derek Swatton, David Moseley, Campbell Winder, Glen Miles, John Farley, etc. (hope I haven't forgotten anyone) for their help and attendance on the day. A special mention must go to Dave Paget who as usual took loads of photographs of this event, 62 actually – you can view them on Dave's photo hosting website (just ask him for the access details).

The next event we took part in was the annual summer National Play Day – which was held on Wednesday 5 August.

National Play Day

The 'Love Parks' event was a forerunner to the National Play Day event held on Wednesday 03 August - The Basingstoke Play Day, where this year 37 children's' events were held throughout Eastrop Park (this is a National event and similar Play Days are held in many towns throughout the country). We again displayed our boats at the event and our main focus was to make many more paper boats for and with the children, plus of course to display some of our model boats and to let some of the children have a go at sailing a radio controlled model boat.

We arrived early to set up our display and quickly erected our gazebos and tables in readiness for the onslaught from the members of the public. The weather was fine, sunny and warm although a little windy. The event was due to commence at 11,00 hours but parents, grandparents and children began filling the park at 10.00 hours and we were quickly targeted by many of them. We were certainly rushed off our feet and had so many boats being made at any one time – our two tables were full all the time with children making their boats and we even had some parents sitting on the grass cutting out the boats! The day certainly didn't drag and we were pushed to the limit assisting in cutting out and gluing boats and generally helping the children. Some of our members also had their boats on the water, letting the children have a go at sailing them under their supervision. The Play Day looked very well attended and at the end of the day when we were packing up, we were told that up to 10000 people had visited the park for this event – if that figure was correct then that was an excellent result. We enjoyed the challenge and hope we gave something back to the children and residents of Basingstoke and that they had some fun trying to build them as well as putting them afloat on the water. It was certainly tiring for us but good fun too.

My thanks go to Andy Clark and Reg Rees who assisted me with the model boat making and along with Joe Harwood were the mainstays in helping make sure all was set up on time and that all went without a hitch. Joe Harwood, Glen Miles, John Farley and Graham Robinson were the 'pond side team' letting the children have a go at sailing their model boats. Unfortunately we were all so busy we did not have time to take any photos of this event – if we had they would have only shown the very large queues of families around our display!!.

As usual, we continue to work with Basingstoke and Deane Council and we have after all, this fantastic facility of a model boat pond to be proud of for both our and the public's use and we must ensure we continue to have the Council on our side. We have always had praise from the Council for our hobby so let us keep it that way.

The next day I received the following email from Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council.

“Thank you to the Model Boat Club”

“Hi Alan

I just wanted to send a huge thank you to you and the Model Boat Club for all their time and effort yesterday. It truly was a busy day, however I hope you all managed to have fun.....

Anyway it was massively appreciated by all and especially by me.

Please pass my thanks on to those who were there”.

Zoe Channon – Community Development Officer Green Spaces, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council

Green Flag Award

The Green Flag award is the benchmark national standard for parks and green spaces in the UK and inspections take place each year in parks and green spaces all over the country and these areas are judged by representatives of the 'Keep Britain Tidy' organisation. Basingstoke and Deane BC has consistently won this award for their parks for a number of years

Whilst on Holiday in May I received an email from our Zoe Channon advising me that the Green flag judges were going to visit Eastrop Park on the 22nd June. She said that luckily for us this is a Wednesday and it means that the Model Boat Club would be out and about using the boating lake and she was really keen to include us as a group in this visit. I duly informed our members and the Club was out in force on the day.

On the 25th June I received the following from Zoe:-

"Dear all

I just wanted to say a huge thank you for the time you provided to the Green Flag judging yesterday for both War Memorial and Eastrop Park representing the park user, volunteer and Friends aspect.

The judge was very complimentary about you all, and your passion and enthusiasm for the spaces and projects that you are working on and use.

Personally to me, it made a huge difference that you were there. I get advised of the outcome directly, so as soon as I hear I'll let you all know, it will be July.

Anyway thank you again

Zoe Channon – Community Development Officer Green Spaces, Basingstoke and Deane BC"

On 27th July I received the following from Zoe

"Dear all

I am just writing to inform you that we were successful in obtaining the Green Flag again this year for both War Memorial and Eastrop Park. This is great news and something you significantly contributed to. Our overall scores were higher too and much more reflective of where both spaces are I think, so we're happy and were certainly happy with the judge.

I apologise that I have only communicated this now, I was embargoed by Keep Britain Tidy until the 21st July from doing any communications external to the Council. Not entirely sure why however thought it best to stick to protocols!

At some stage I'll be sent the new Green Flags (hopefully this week) which I can get put up in both parks, and print the new certificates for the noticeboard.

I will communicate this more widely, for example through the Natural Basingstoke network, however as volunteer / user group involved in the site I wanted to let you know first given the contribution you make."

They did try to arrange a photo shoot with the Green Flag, a prominent Councillor and our BMBC members but due to a Council meeting overrunning it had to be cancelled. However it is good to know that we made our contribution to the award and that we are valued as a group at Eastrop – well done us !!!.

Our Chairman, Andy Clark, has provided me with an article for this Newsletter – Many thanks and keep them coming Andy. Here goes :-

A light hearted guide to making the most of your time at the lake.

Over the years I have noticed a number of “situations” which can have an adverse influence on the pleasure of RC boating. Some of these “situations” have happened to me, so with tongue firmly in cheek I thought I would give some guidance on how best to enjoy your time at the lake.

Most members have to travel in order to reach the lake, so it is therefore vital that all equipment is loaded into the car before setting off. This includes such diverse items such as:-

- A Boat
- A Controller
- Batteries as required for both boat and controller

I have heard of and even seen members who have arrived:-

- Without a boat but with controller and batteries
- Without a controller but with boat and batteries
- Without batteries for boat and or controller

You know who you are but, for the sake of anonymity and not wishing to be thrown in the lake, I will of course abstain from mentioning names.

Members who arrive with all essential items should give themselves a pat on the back for a job well done and maybe even give pause to think that that shows whasisname/family member/doctor (delete as appropriate) who thinks I am getting past it! Not only can I travel on my own and manage to find the lake but I can also bring all the necessities required for a good session of RC boating. Ha!

However before getting carried away with the celebrations, saying hello to fellow members and maybe having that last Werthers Original being saved for a special occasion, just when you think the worst is over and nothing can possibly go wrong, some different “situations” arise that can make you suspicious of your sanity.

It is “advisable” that the controller is compatible with the boat in that they both work on 27MHz, 40MHz or 2.4GHz. In the anticipation and eagerness of packing the car for the expedition to the lake it’s possible to pick up the wrong controller with observable results. These results being conspicuous in their absence, apart from the frustration that all the earlier good work has come unstuck at virtually the last hurdle. Thank goodness whasisname/family member/doctor (delete as appropriate) cannot see this. In this instance all that the member can do is sit down and bemoan their bad luck. Which is why the club is also known as the “sitting about and chatting club”.

The enjoyment of RC boating is definitely enhanced if the batteries for both boat and controller are charged, nothing is more frustrating than arriving with discharged batteries. I hold my hand up to that one!

The knowledgeable member always checks that the boat and controller actually work together before setting off on their passage. But as with all technical items sometimes gremlins attack, and this seems to happen quite often during the journey to the lake. What members have not heard the mournful cry from a fellow member, "but it worked on the bench/in the garage/dining room table before I left." There then follows derisory comments from those members who by design or luck actually have working boats on the lake. The luckless member now has to try to effect running repairs with of course "helpful suggestions" from amused spectators. This, of course has happened to me, more than once, and always turned out to be loose battery connections. No matter how many times you check at some point in time something will occur that makes you feel a right chump.

Now let's imagine that all has gone according to plan, you have arrived with boat, controller, batteries, and it all seems to work. It is now that the final "situation" can arise. In the excitement of the moment somehow either the boat or controller is not switched on prior to launching which can result in one of the following scenarios being involuntarily enacted

In the case of a power boat it is normally the controller that is left switched off with the result of an uncontrollable boat making its way across the lake, normally at high speed, spreading cries of dismay and consternation from fellow members as they attempt to undertake emergency evasive manoeuvres. The poor hapless boat owner can be seen setting off in pursuit around the lake in a vain attempt to head off a collision between a runaway boat and concrete lake edge.

In the case of a sailing yacht, it is normally the boat receiver that is not switched on with the result, irrespective of the wind direction, a yacht sailing serenely into the distance straight as a die towards the dreaded island! No matter what the member does the yacht eventually has to be rescued from the island via a long string accompanied by many "helpful" comments from other members. Yep you're right this also has happened to me!

Both of these scenarios result in red faced members scratching their heads and muttering "how on earth did that happen, I must be going daft", with of course fellow members heartily agreeing!!

Well that's about it for my guidance except for a final one, no matter what happens you are there to **"enjoy yourself"**.

Chas Redford

As many of you know our Chas has taken part over the years in the Big Wheel Cycle Ride. This year Chas was at it again and completed the ride despite (in his own words) :-

"The old legs. gave out at the bottom of a 2 mile hill. (So did the battery on my electric bike). But I got there. Cream crackered ! Chas"

However, Following the ride Chas became unwell at home and was taken quickly to hospital. Chas was diagnosed as having had a stroke and had lost the use of his limbs on one side of his body and his speech. Thankfully Chas responded to the Doctors rapid diagnosis and treatment and within a day had started to regain his mobility and speech. He made good progress and was allowed home by the weekend. What a relief - we wish Chas all the best in his return to his old self.

Chas's wife has threatened to have his bike chopped up – that is possibly less painful than what she could have said or done to him. You can't keep a good man down though and Chas has been visiting the pond again in recent weeks, driven there by his son and son-in-law – take it easy though Chas.



Chas with his medal



Above: Chas with his granddaughter at the finish

The SS Great Britain Part Two (the story of this great ship, cont. - Editor)

In the September 2015 edition of the Club Newsletter I wrote **Part One** of an article about the SS Great Britain which my wife and I had visited down in Bristol Docks. I thought it about time to now continue the story looking at her service at sea, her demise and her final rescue and return to Bristol.

On 26 July 1845, seven years after the Great Western Steamship Company had decided to build the ship, and five years late in her completion, *SS Great Britain* left with 45 passengers on board, on her maiden transatlantic service trip from Liverpool to New York Captained by James Hosken. The ship made the journey in 14 days and 21 hours, at an average speed of 9.25 knots – almost 1.5 knots slower than the record at the time. She made the return trip in 13½ days – quicker but not an exceptional time by standards already set.

The six-bladed propeller originally fitted proved totally unsatisfactory in service and was quickly replaced with a four-bladed model. Brunel then decided to try and improve the speed of the ship by riveting an extra two inches of iron to each propeller blade. On her next crossing to New York, carrying 104 passengers, the ship ran into heavy weather, lost a mast and three propeller blades. After repairs in New York, she set out for Liverpool with only 28 passengers, and lost four propeller blades during the crossing. By this time, another design flaw had become evident - the ship rolled heavily, especially in calm weather without the steadying influence of sail, causing a lot of 'discomfort' to the passengers.

The six-bladed propeller was removed and a four-bladed cast iron model, substituted. The third mast was removed, and the iron rigging, which had proven unsatisfactory, was replaced

with conventional rigging. Whilst work was being undertaken, other alterations took place - two bilge keels were added to each side in an effort to reduce her tendency to roll. These repairs and alterations delayed her return to service until the following year.

During her second season of service, in 1846 *SS Great Britain* successfully completed two round trips to New York at an acceptable speed, but was then laid up for repairs to one of her chain drums, which showed unexpected wear. On her third passage of the season to New York, her captain made a series of navigational errors that resulted in her being run aground in Dundrum Bay on the northeast coast of Ireland. She remained aground for almost a year, protected by temporary works organised by Brunel. In August 1847, she was floated free at a cost of £34,000 and taken back to Liverpool, but the ship owners were unhappy and after 'sitting' at the North Dock for some time, she was sold to Gibbs, Bright & Co., former agents of the Great Western Steamship Company, for only £25,000

The keel was badly damaged during the grounding and was completely renewed along a length of 150 feet and the owners took the opportunity to further strengthen the hull. The new owners decided also to give the vessel a total refit. The original engines were removed and replaced with smaller, lighter and more modern oscillating engines. The chain-drive gearing was replaced with a more simple cog-wheel arrangement. Her three large boilers were replaced with six smaller ones, operating at twice the pressure of the previous ones. She was also fitted with a new 300-foot cabin on the main deck and together with smaller boilers fitted this allowed the cargo capacity to be almost doubled, from 1,200 to 2,200 tons.

Her four-bladed propeller was replaced by a slightly smaller three-bladed type, and the bilge keels which were previously added to reduce the tendency to roll, were replaced by a heavy external oak keel. The five-masted schooner sail-plan was replaced by four masts, two of which were square-rigged. With the refit complete, *SS Great Britain* went back into service on the New York run and after only one further round trip she was sold again, to Antony Gibbs & Sons, which planned to place her on the England-Australia run.

The new owners used *SS Great Britain* to meet the demand for passenger services to Australia following the discovery of gold in Victoria, New South Wales, in the 1850s and eventually found long-term service on this route. She was given a third refit with her passenger accommodation increasing from 360 to 730, and her sail-plan altered again to a traditional three-masted, square-rigged pattern. She was also fitted with a removable propeller, which could be hauled up on deck by chains in order to reduce drag when running under sail power. In 1852, *Great Britain* made her first voyage to Melbourne, Australia, carrying 630 emigrants and she operated on the England to Australia route for almost 30 years.

You can see from the story so far that *SS Great Britain* led a chequered life in her early years but her 30 years service on the Anglo Australia run helped to repair her reputation and leave her as one of our maritime 'greats'. Time and page space is running out so I will write about her demise and her return home to Bristol in a future Newsletter.

Well, I must close now and just to let you know that there are **4717** words of wisdom (go on count them if you must) plus many pictures in this newsletter which must be value for your money ! If there is anyone who would like to send me an article for the next edition, I would be most appreciative as its saves me thinking of something to write ! **Ta,Ta, for now folks.**

***Newsletter by Alan Spooner – Secretary / Treasurer / Newsletter Editor
Basingstoke Model Boat Club***