



BASINGSTOKE MODEL BOAT CLUB

Newsletter

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September 2026

Membership News

There have been 2 new members since the last newsletter. The current membership now stands at 94, of which 2 are currently junior members. Please join me in welcoming **Steve Nunn and Ian Mills** to the club and we hope to see them at the lake whenever they can attend.

New members are always most welcome – if you know of someone who 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

Incidents at the Lake

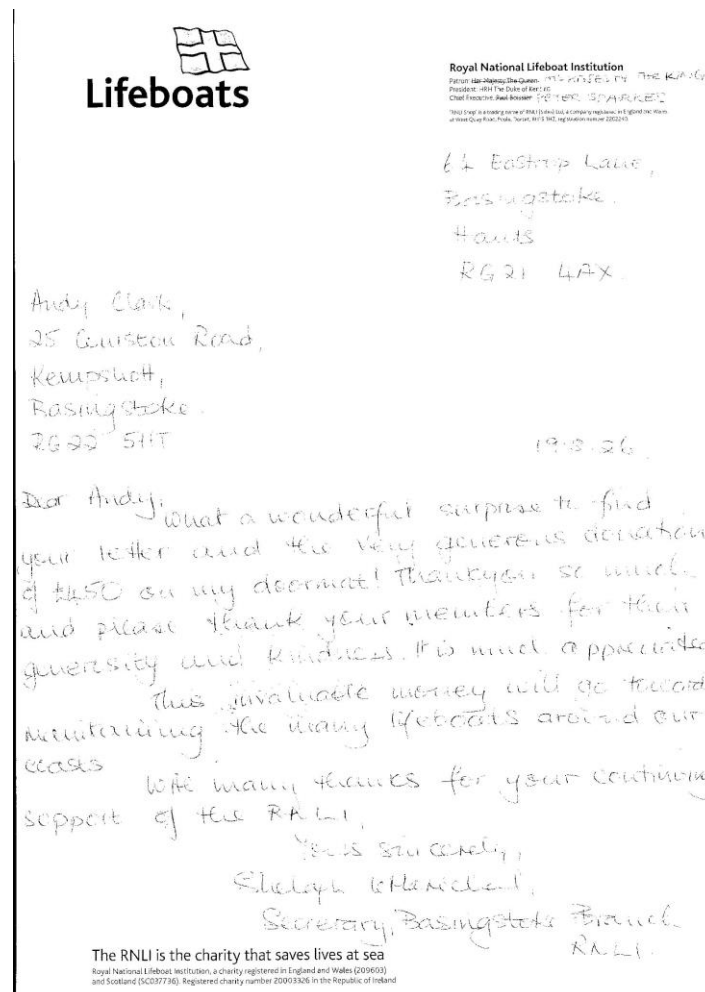
A number of “unfortunate incidents” have occurred at the lake over the summer in which some members’ models have been involved in avoidable collisions with other models. I know full well that accidents do happen, more so when one is distracted and or chatting, but I urge all members to be “model aware” not only of your own, but of those in the near vicinity of yours so that if necessary avoidance action can be taken.

May I suggest to those who like running a fast electric model to consider using more of the western end of the lake especially when there are a number of models on the water.

Thank you for your co-operation and hopefully we will all benefit from a reduction in collisions.

Sale of Boats

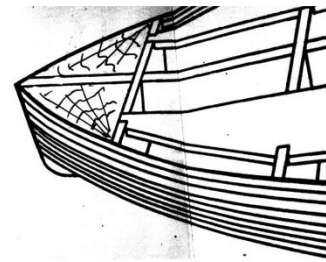
Due to a house move the club was offered in August a number of models by a modeller who enjoyed the build experience but not the sailing of the finished boat. I am pleased to report that the sale of the boats raised a total of £900.00 which was split 50:50 between the modeller and the RNLI.



My Challenge: Non-Motorized Kit to Operational Stern Wheeler – Doug Stewart

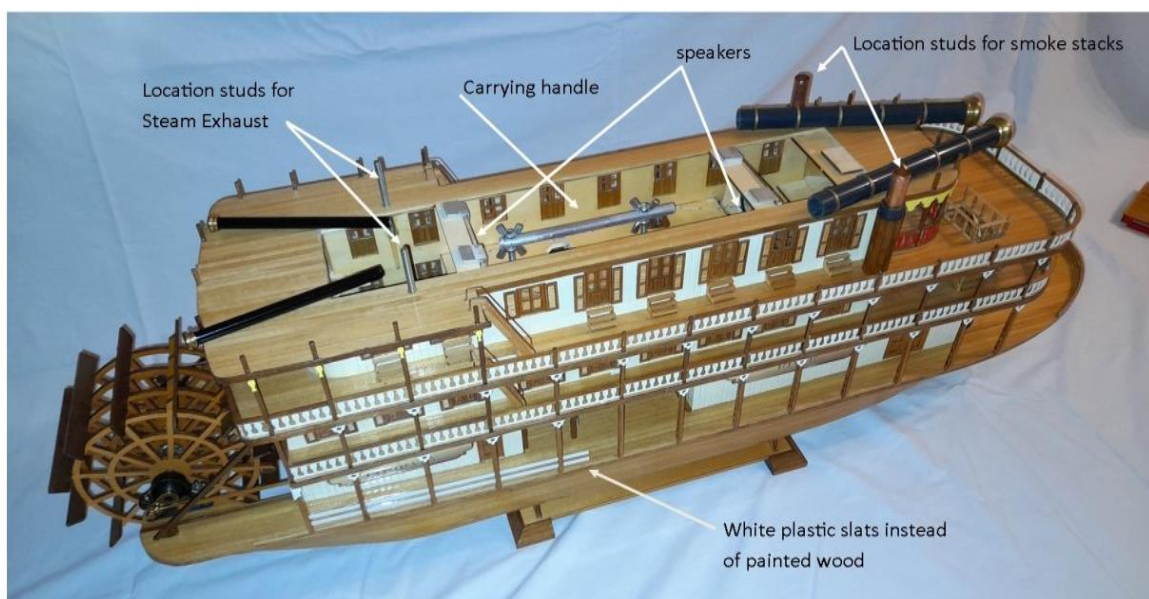
I have never tackled a model boat before, model railways yes, but I just have this fascination of the paddle wheel and all those vessels that use them for propulsion. By chance, I saw the "1870 MISSISSIPPI" non-motorized kit for sale. I had to start somewhere.

I found the construction of the hull a bit daunting. Little guidance, lots of planking (2 layers), lots of feathering and a dreadful fear of ending up with a misshaped bow. To help, I chose to add a pair of carefully shaped blocks of wood located tight up inside the bow, which once fixed in position made feathering, bending and securing the planking into place a great deal easier. It worked. The hull started to take shape, although it took a long time to complete.



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To get full and easy access to the entire propulsion, steering gear and electronic equipment I deviated from the original plans and built the superstructure on a separate main deck



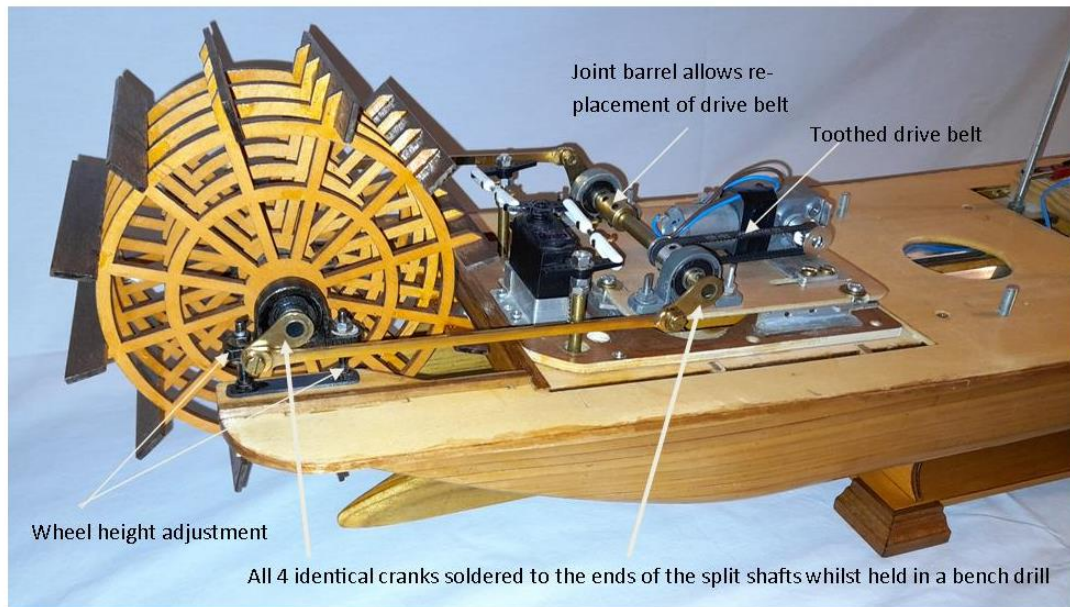
The assembly of the superstructure followed the kit plans quite closely but I made a few “improvements” practical and cosmetic.

To help with transportation the smoke and steam exhaust stacks became removable. The aluminium smoke stacks supplied with the kit were replaced with black plastic tubes. This solved a cosmetic problem. Spraying the aluminium tubes black and then adding several tight brass rings along their length afterwards would have led to scratching and poor appearance. I built in a carrying handle.

In the same area are the two elongated location studs pinning the two “main decks” in place securing the two parts of the boat together quite firmly with butterfly nuts. Speakers were added for Calliope music and for the main boat whistle. The 3 tier white wooden railings on the sides of the main deck were replaced with white styrene slats, again for cosmetic reasons and simplicity of build.

The kit had little guidance on motorization. It was down to me. I trawled the internet for suitable motors, bearings and with guidance from club members, the radio control gear.

I was determined to drive the paddle wheel by connecting rods using the “tank engine” principle, with the connecting rods offset by 90 degrees. Therefore the connecting rods and cranks had to be absolutely identical and the engine platform had to be totally adjustable fore and aft as well as sideways to ensure the connecting rods worked in perfect symmetry. I had no idea how deep in the water the boat would eventually float when complete, so I had to allow for more adjustment in the



height of the axle of the paddle wheel as well.

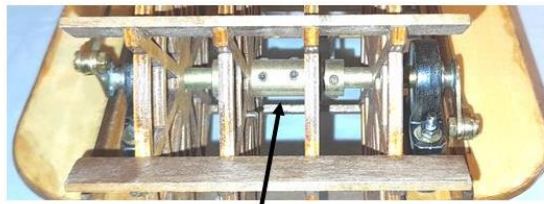
The paddle wheel itself was the next challenge. Four wooden spokes and twelve wooden paddles all held together with araldite but NOT joined to the paddle wheel's axle, (an 8mm tube). For purposes of assembly, accurate positioning and maintenance, both the paddle and drive axles had to be split, the paddle shaft exactly midway along its length.

For the purpose of assembly, I held an off cut of the 8mm tube in the chuck of a bench drill and slowly fed the wooden spokes up this tube by raising the drill's table and using spacers between each spoked wheel. The spacers were the exact length of a brass shaft coupler. This made the alignment and symmetry of the paddle wheel easy, and the whole assembly, with the dummy shaft removed was solid and square.

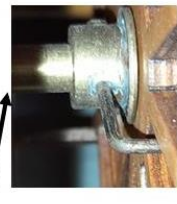
The assembly of the paddle wheel is detailed below.



Bearing construction is a brass bolt and spacing washers, screwed into threaded cranks with final adjustment via a lock nut.



A brass shaft coupler with grub screws is used to position the wheel on the wheel shaft.



Final drive to the wheel is via two halves of a second coupler fitted with 90 deg rods.

Next dilemma? What speed does a paddle wheel turn at? I guessed 60 revolutions a minute, but I did build in some options for faster gearing. Sixty revolutions worked well and it resulted in a slow walking pace on the water. Fast enough for me, realistic for the boat.



Whilst not completely finished, I achieved my goal. The boat sits in the water well with just sufficient freeboard for sailing her in very still weather conditions. However, I chose to change the rudders from aluminium to wood to add more buoyancy at the stern. Speed through the water is adequate and she responds well to the twin rudders even though they are forward of the paddle wheel. Response to the rudders when going astern is of course, excellent.

I am pretty happy that there is no leakage into the hull between the duplicate main decks but after its last outing on the lake, I have made a Perspex screen which sits between the paddle wheel and superstructure to prevent ingress of spray off the paddle wheel, particularly when running astern.

Many thanks Doug for your article and I can confirm that the model looks great on the water!

Visit by the Surface Warships Association 13-9-26

For the second time this year the club hosted a few members from the association. I understand the weather was not the best, I was in Mallorca where it was +32!

Chris took a few photos of the event.





A Dip into the Archives-September 2016

The first in an occasional series of articles from the past, starting with one like I wrote in September 2016.

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 whatsisname/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 ~~whatsisname/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. Which 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”**.

Close

Well that’s it for this issue, according to word count there are 2125 words in this edition. Many thanks again to Doug and Chris for their contributions.

Articles from members for newsletters are always very welcome so if you are restoring a model or undertaking a new build do share your experiences with the whole club.

Cheers

Andy

*I will as usual ask **Carl**, our webmaster, to add a copy of this newsletter to our BMBC website.*