

Monthly News Letter

Boathouse 4 Volunteers

February 2022



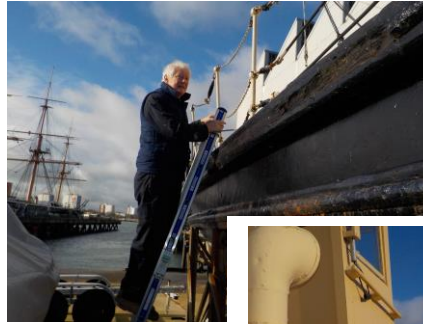
So St Valentines day has been and gone, the years shortest month is now a thing of the past but we did manage a fair degree of work.

Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust



man's' tin hat to the top of the smoke stack coming up from the galley. Over far right his drill is working in full auto mode all by itself.

HLD D49 maintenance Jeremy continues with his long term task of getting D49's decking covered in to halt the flow of rainwater over the coming winter months.



Above left you can see Jeremy getting ready to start the day ready for another day's slog.



VIC 56 – The team are making good progress with the maintenance programme Over left Beth is clearing out the coal bunker and moved all of those bags. Of coal. Below left Paul is in the process of fitting a little 'China



WW2 Dory Restoration The guys and gals have just about finished plotting the shape of the boat and are now into the next phase of removing rotten planking and framework in anticipation of the restoration. Over left Mark is in the process of cutting out some screws so that he can take away a damaged section of the starboard after section below the waterline. He obviously has the process



all worked out, as you can see just left here. They will use the section removed to make a pattern so that they can make a new section. Below left he has done a fair job as once where there was planking, now there is fresh air.



And now a little bit of history photos and research courtesy of Tim D. These are just to show everyone what Steve and his

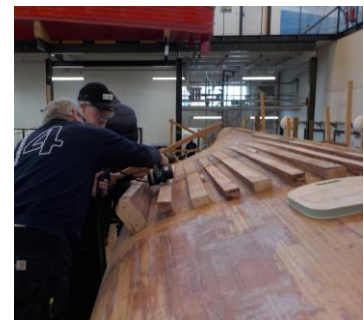


merry gang are aiming for.

Above three photos are showing the 18ft motorised Dory ashore, in the process of being launched and away under power with a 'Marine in civvies' or is it, perhaps a dock yard matey doing some harbour trials. Eat your heart out Steve.

Whalers Excellent and Westerman Again little or no change on the whaler front in the month.

CMB4 Replica build – Yet another month working on the dreaded step. In the photos below left you can see an overview of the inner structure of the step albeit at this stage it is a dry fit of the after laminated section, but it does hopefully give an idea of things to come. Middle below Ian B is sizing up some cross section support pieces whilst below right Ian P and Steve B are planing up the longitudinal inner stringers. Middle bottom photo shows Ian B and Tim D working on the port side inter spacers.



Far right Mike F is working his magic with a spoke shave as he is shaping up the main step after section and just right is a general shot of the internal step structure being 'photo bombed' by the newly painted landing craft F8. Below left, Ian P and Steve B continue with the fairing of the intermediate longitudinal stringers with Ian on the power plane and Steve with the gauge. Below middle



Mike appears to be happy to have got the better of his spokeshave and diddy planes and waves the finished product in the air. Below right David is passing his Mk1 eyeball over the after section of the step as he checks it for fit. Finally, below left looking forward towards the stem you can see that the shaping of the step is coming along very well.



The step



laminates are made up from 5 x 9mm sections of marine ply glued together with epoxy resin and it will eventually be glued and bolted right through the hull to make sure that never the twain shall part company. This section is a high stress area of the boat.

In the photo above middle John B is in the process of fairing off the forward ridge of the Chine log and just over left he is getting ready for the day's onslaught with his daily prayers to the great CMB god in the sky. We have quite a few new starters working on the boat these days. Over near right Whaler John and Newbie Ian (I hope) are fairing in the Port side chine log with John 'Squared' far left tidying the cross-section dividers. Generally if you need to speak to anyone on the Monday crew, apart from 'ian' call out 'john'



CMB4 Replica Build Project – Some background information.

The Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust is very fortunate to have a personal link to the original CMB 4 located on the upper mezzanine floor in Boat House 4. She is currently on long term loan from the Imperial War Museum.

Sitting on our Boat Committee is Commander Rodney Agar RN. Rodney is the nephew of the late Captain Augustus Agar VC, DSO, RN (died in 1968) who commanded the two boats, CMB's 4 and 7 when they were lent by the Navy to the Secret Service for hazardous service in taking spies in and out of Russia during the Baltic Campaign in 1919. Whilst serving on CMB4 Augustus was awarded the VC and his crew decorated for the single-handed action in sinking the Russian

Bolshevik heavy cruiser *Oleg* off Kronstadt in June 1919. Augustus also acted as pathfinder for the famous Kronstadt Raid carried out by 8 CMBs in August 1919, when 2 battleships were sunk, and the Russian Bolshevik Fleet immobilised – arguably the most successful raid in all Coastal Forces history.

During WW2, Rodney's father was a POW, and Rodney was made a ward of Augustus and under his guidance at the age of 13 he commenced a 25year career in the Royal Navy before finally leaving to go into business. His great interest co-incidentally has always been small craft and at one stage later in 1988 for 14 years he owned and operated the classic Nelson 40ft 'GRAND ESPOIR', designed and built by the late Peter Thornycroft who also became his good friend. Peter's grandfather, Sir John Thornycroft had designed and built the revolutionary 40ft CMB in 1915.

40 years ago in 1983, the original CMB4 had been preserved and was in the hands of the Imperial War Museum, having been restored from a bad state by the IBTC at Lowestoft. Rodney helped with that restoration – and on completion she was displayed by the IWM in the back of hangar No3 at Duxford Air Museum. It was here that she remained, rather unloved until she was lent to the PNBPT and moved into Boathouse 4 in 2019. At this stage of her life, she was sadly far too fragile to be restored for operational use.

In 1986, Peter Thornycroft, grandson of the designer, together with Rodney were going to initiate building a Replica with his company 'TT Boat Designs', with a GRP laminated hull. This unfortunately fell through when Peter sadly died the next year in 1987. Time moved on and nearly 27 years later in 2014, together with John Margetson, also grandson of Sir John Thornycroft, they formed the CMB Project Group. Along with other individuals made up of John Jefferies, John Askham, Steve Brewer and the late John Pollard they eventually they put together a proposal paper for the PNBPT and Boat Committee headed by Neil Rankin and Peter Goodship. The Trust had the capacity to consider building a new construction sea-going Replica. They agreed the go-ahead and applied for, and thankfully received Government LIBOR Funding for this exciting project in November 2016. That was A GREAT DAY when this historic, challenging project started!!

One hundred years after CMBs were first delivered to the Navy, there are now only just two original 40ft CMB hulls remaining – the iconic CMB4 ashore at PNBPT Portsmouth and CMB9 which was converted into a radio-controlled prototype. The latter is still running, albeit at a reduced speed. She is in private use at Avonmouth.

CMB4 is the only 40ft CMB from WW1 to be preserved as such in her original state – and a 'Jewel in the Crown' for the Navy's Coastal Force's history. It is marvellous that she is now displayed safely by the PNBPT in Boathouse 4 in Portsmouth and properly cared for.

In her short active life in WW1, CMB4 also had a remarkable earlier career in the English Channel in 1917/18 – when under the command of Lieutenant W.N.T. Beckett DSC RN, she took part in numerous patrols along the Belgian coast and carried out a successful attack sinking a German destroyer and damaging another off Zeebrugge - followed by her notable exploits in 1919 in the Baltic.

In their day, CMBs heralded a revolution in fast motor-boat design and achieved speeds out of all proportion to their size and length. They had pioneered the way for offensive action by small, fast attack craft against major warships and were the forerunners of the Navy's Coastal Forces.

I would like to thank Rodney most sincerely for providing me with the above story highlighting the close links held between PNBPT in 2022 and CMB4 in 1916, it in no small way contributes to our overall build project and the historic nature of the vessel currently in our care, whilst giving recognition to the CMB Project Group, The Trust management, the volunteers and their role in bringing this project to the point it is today.

Armed Steam Cutter ASC 26 – Ollie and his team of merry lads and lassies are moving forward with this restoration project, The internal fit out has made major moves in the last two months. In the photos below left you can see John P and Keith D working in the after accommodation, Middle photo below shows what they have been working on with the



gratings nearing completion of the x 8 coats of varnish. Above right our two part time armourers have made up the first stage of the Maxin Gun Mount. Below left Dave B, and I think it is Kevin (apologies if that is wrong) have taken two minutes out of fitting out the forward section. To smile at the camera. Over left in the middle shows the ongoing fit out.



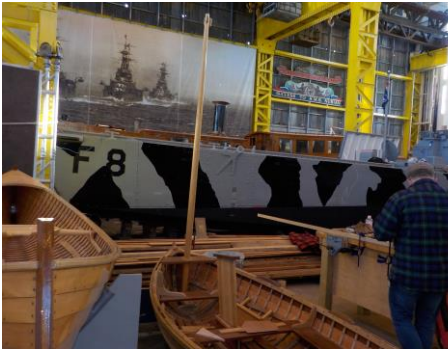
Bottom row on the left we have got a new starter Rachael taking in some of the rather athletic moves required of a volunteer whilst fitting gunwales. Below middle, the same activity of gunwale fitting with Rachael making notes. Finally below far right John P is lord of all he surveys. Eat you heart

out Ollie he beat you to it.

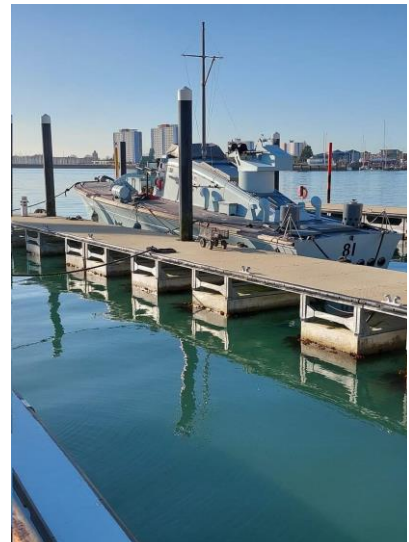


Seaplane Tender ST 1502 – Following last month's work out she is now taking a short rest before coming out for a brief session of cosmetic care ready for this year's new season

LCA F8 –, Shady Lane and his team of merry bods have been busy again during the month. She has been transformed from her light ‘weather work grey’ to full Atlantic camouflage colours. This is in readiness for the forthcoming Falklands 40 , the 40th anniversary of the Falklands Conflict



HSL 102 and MGB 81 and currently alongside our pontoons but 81 is soon to be moved for a paint upgrade. Looking at the photo on the right you will just be able to see the dummy Smoke Pots that Tiger has made and fitted. They also double up as additional air intakes for the engine room.



Steam Cutter 438 – ‘Mischief’ – A piece of belated news.



Immediately before Christmas Tim Hollis her previous owner formally donated his steam cutter S.C. 438 (Mischief) to the collection in BH4. In so doing she joins the rest of our steam collection made up of S.C. 439 (Osborne), S.C.26 (Falmouth), S.C. 236 (Janet) and VIC 56 under the ownership of the PNBPT. Together with Steam Pinnacle 199 (Owned by the Museum of the Royal Navy), this means Boat House 4 is now home to the second largest group of original steam vessels in the country. The largest is the Windermere Jetty, home to a collection of Victorian and Edwardian ‘gentlemen’s launches’, however BH4’s collection of naval steam launches is very different and quite unique.

When Hannah and Tim signed the formal handover, Tim gave her a paper which his father, Peter Hollins, wrote for the Boat Committee back in 2004 proposing almost exactly this collection of naval steam launches, so donating Mischief to the collection brings about the fulfilment of this ambition. Of course, now she is officially owned by the PNBPT, it is hope that others, including volunteers, will also be able to use and enjoy her. Tim and his father were her guardians for 21 years; Although Tim is away in the USA for the next twelve months or so he hopes to remain involved from afar. He is however delighted that her future is assured as part of what is now a unique and important steam collection at BH4.

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: - boatbitsus@ntlworld.com. Fred is the name