

Club Magazine



SUMMER EDITION 2021

**Luton & District
MBC**

... a club NOT just for boats ...

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EDITORIAL

Sorry this edition of the Club Magazine is somewhat late in its publication but I was very short of articles and held back until our secretary was in a position to assist in this area.

Our team of maintenance engineers and navigators have been busy landscaping the lake-side sailing area by extending the seating area and removing most of the weeds. I am certain that our thanks go out to all those that provided assistance to improving the Clubs lakeside facilities.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Again, so much has happened since the last magazine! We started sailing; we completed the road map, and then got restricted just before finalising everything! The main points are we upped our capacity under the rule of 6 to 12, by clearing the diving area so we could have 2 groups of 6 sailing. When we started this, I heard a lot of moans about being in the diving compound. These were soon silenced when it was realised that it was a massive suntrap! No one complains now!!

We are now allowed to sail with a group of 30. Not that we have 30 sailing, but it means family can now sit in the compound. Tea has been reinstated, so Thanks Dave and Carol!!! In the near future we are hoping to reinstate bacon roll Sunday, and that should complete the cycle for us.

We have Shows listed in the diary already, with the first being Wings and Wheels at North Weald on the 26-27th June. We have a compound sail hopefully in July where we will be holding a Bring and Buy Sale. Plus, in August we have been invited back to Fenny Stratford Canal Festival. September will bring days out at Brambleton, Black Park and a weekend show at St Albans.

Also, In September, barring any further restrictions, we will be holding our AGM. Any proposals/nominations must be sent to our returning officer, John Lamkin. I will ask him (I'm writing this before I have told him!!!!). Anyone who wishes to stand for the committee **MUST** be nominated and seconded. Please remember that Mike Skuce is standing down as Treasurer this year, so that's one position to fill!

Positions available are

Chairman

Secretary

Treasurer

Head of plastics

General committee x 2

On a personal note, I would like to thank all those who have helped set up and close down each week, turned up for work parties, edited the magazine and kept the website going, and generally helped me out with various jobs that have needed doing. It's you that make the club, not the committee, (they just sit around and drink tea and at chips). Without a membership there can be no committee, and with no committee there can be no club. So can someone please volunteer to be secretary next year!!!!

LOCKDOWN AND WORKING PARTIES

During lockdown, I had the idea to contact the parks dept. regarding doing a litter pick within the fence line of the lake, plus extending the seating area and trying to re grass the area behind the seating area. After several meetings with the Parks dept. and Horticultural Dept. We got the go ahead

For two weekends we cleared the compound, this was completed by Harvey Vaughan and myself, while John Allen took on the task of litter picking, then clearing the diving area of rubbish. He and his team of helpers did an amazing job clearing probably the biggest eyesore in the park. The amount of debris stacked was quite high; they even pulled a shopping trolley out of the lake! Meanwhile Pete James and his intrepid team spent a couple of hours pulling branches out of the lake. We also bought an electric outboard motor for the club boat. Pete James and myself tested it one week the next weekend Tony Martin and Pete James went out in her. While all this was going on my team were in the hut getting rid of rubbish and the reinforcing the shelving boards. Once this is completed (yes, it's still ongoing!) I can then bring the club boats currently stored in my shed, down to the hut.

We ordered a few railway sleepers to be delivered on Bank holiday Friday, and on the Tuesday, club member Dave Jazani offered to pay for new paving slabs. These were picked up by myself on Thursday in my little car. I do like driving on 2 wheels! I phoned the timber company Thursday pm to check on delivery and was told 9.30 to 10am. That was great. Friday morning, I got a phone call from the driver at 8.10am saying he would be 15 minutes! I was not even dressed, having just got out the bath. A quick change of clothes and I whizzed to the lake and got there a few minutes before he did. We off loaded the truck and then I rung round Brian and Mark, Terry and Tony M. to see what time they could get down. Brian, Mark and Anne turned up first and we started to move the railway sleepers into the compound. The Terry turned up. We started to level the area where the sleepers would go. Dave Seath and Tony Martin turned up as well to give a hand. Sleepers in place we then had to back fill behind them so that the slabs could go on top. We did not have enough soil, so we stole it from the diving area and transported it in buckets!! After an hour of back filling and levelling we had extended the seating area by 30ft. This now means we can have 6 people seated lakeside instead of 3 seated and 3 in the compound. Also, as the diving compound was now cleared, we could use this for another 6 people sailing. Add in we can sail from the boat house by the bridge, and we have a total of 3 areas, all capable of holding 6 people sailing. So, going forward, that means we can have 18 people sailing! At present, we have just used the main compound and the diving area. One bonus on the diving area is the fact is it's a complete sun trap!

Going forward, we hope to finish the hut tidy, put some lighting in the main hut area and repave the steps area in the main compound.

On another Sunday, after the tidy ups, I had organised with LBC a Park litter pick in conjunction with Luton Volunteer Services. As our club has experience of being by open water, we were delegated to clear the inside of the fence. We had several volunteers from the club, John Allan (again), Tony and Terry Martin, Dave Seath, John and Kaye, myself to name a few, (sorry if you helped but are not named). I don't remember how many bags of rubbish we filled, but it was a minimum of 1 each, and I know some did more than 1! A big thanks you to all who helped on this, and we hope to carry on with this every couple of months. I would also like to do a lake clean of bottle cans and bags that will be on going though.

In early April, I spoke to the gentleman who flies drones in the park. I asked the normal questions about his drone licence etc, which he had. He even showed me on his tablet all the forms and maps he uses to get permissions to fly in the parks etc. A very impressive piece of kit and a lot further on than I had thought! He has offered his services to survey the lake for us from above to find some of those illusive branches below the waterline that we all catch our boats on! I will keep in contact with him for future use, especially as he wants to film the boats sailing from above and at near ground level.

In May, we had another work party, where we cleared the nettles from the diving area. This is because I have asked the council if we can plant herbs and flowers here as it is a natural focal point down the lake. It's also to stop the rats coming out to watch the boats. There was only a small group of us, but Tony Martin did sterling work getting the strimmers running, while Terry Martin, Jon Allen, John Millet and myself hacked pulled and dug out roots, ably assisted by Tony sweeping up! Any green fingered amongst you can help at the next work party...stay tuned for dates! All plants being use are rat unfriendly; yes, there are plants that rats don't like!

Things to do in the compound in future are

More anti slip strips on the landing stage

Strim the top of our compound that's being overrun with weeds

Install a sleeper near the steps

Plant up by the steps

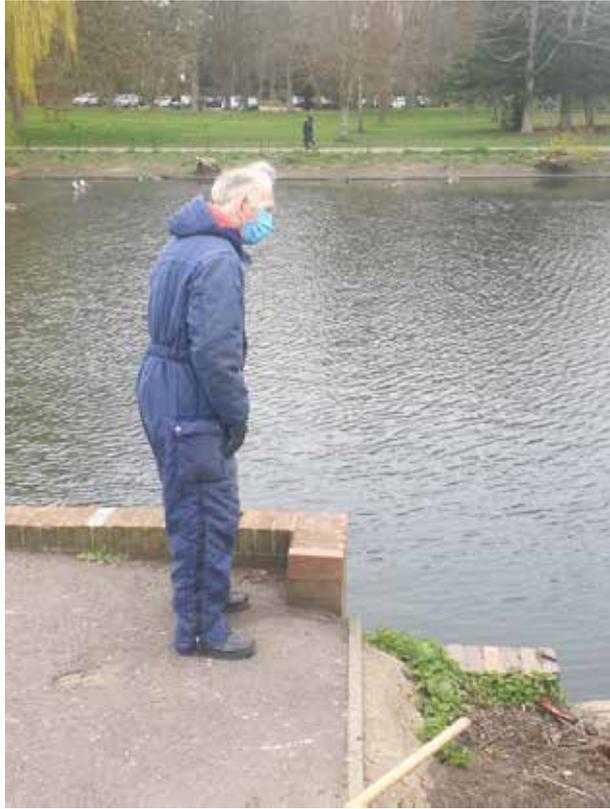
Level the top of the steps

Back boards for the seating area

Start sowing rye grass with wild flowers in

Some pictures showing the work carried out to date may be seen below including those responsible for doing the hard work.





DOWSETT TOWERS

One fine day in February, whilst I was going slowly loopy while on enforced Furlough, Mr Dowsett asked if I could help put up a shed in his garden for his wife. Not a problem, he had already made the piles and levelled them, cut the base timbers to length. He needed help lifting and screwing the timbers together. As I had limited time each day, we cracked on making the base. This was just lifting timbers into place and the screwing the various sections together and releveling as reqd. We then laid the shed base on top of the sub base, screwed down and checked levels. All this while drinking tea! We then proceeded to sort the back section walls onto the shed ensuring all was square. This then ended my day, as I had a meeting with the council, which I thought would be a 1-hour affair (based on previous meetings). Nope, hours sitting there listening to people waffle on and not make a decision. By the time I got out its was 5pm. So next day again I had a meeting in the morning..... got there and it was cancelled. No one told me!

So back to Mikes. He had been busy after had left and done a few bits and bobs that helped out plus added the other 2 back wall sections, like making more tea and sorting the wood packs. We cracked on; the shed was squared at the back, but had 3 front sides. We installed all the front sides and doorways, always double checking everything. We installed the cross bracing for the roof sections. Then the pitched roof was pieced together on the floor. As each piece of the roof was a triangle, before we fitted them up, we had cut the felt out on the floor. Each roofing section had 3 pieces x 5 sections. So, 15 sections of felt to be tacked in place. This was again done on the floor. Once each roofing section was screwed together and felted, we then had to lift them into place. This was even more fun than the base and walls. The roof sections were 2 pieces screwed together and felted. They were flimsy, but once installed became rigid. Putting them up in the cross bracing was a lot of effort.

Once the roof sections were in place, we had to climb on the roof, to install long strips of felt along each roof joint. We were about halfway through this when we realised that we didn't have quite enough clout nails. We just spaced them further apart!!! We also found out that the doors when installed had wooden cross beams on to hold the doors square during installation.... Didn't hold them square! Mike sorted that that out after I left. His wife also asked for the side to be extended slightly as well. All in all, an enjoyable couple of days, playing around in a building site. Thanks Mike, you did stop me going potty, although I know a lot of you think I was already Potty!



YOUR CLUB NEEDS YOU!



It was announced at the recent AGM that Mike Skuce would be standing down as **Club Treasurer** in September of this year. Therefore, the Club is now seeking a replacement to take effect when Mike retires. **Anyone interested please contact Pete Carmen - Club Secretary**

CLUB TREASURER

Job Description

Maintain an Excel spread sheet detailing all monies received and bills paid.

Receive membership yearly subscriptions.

Handling and holding cash.

Bank cheques and cash.

Liaise with Club Secretary regarding membership, bills and payments.

Maintaining a log of all members

Access to a laptop, Tablet or PC with internet access will be required

Knowledge and use of Excel spreadsheets and internet banking required

Training will be given to the right candidate

This position is available from September 2021, but training to commence ASAP for the right candidate.

CHEATING and BAD SPORTSMANSHIP

A time of fun and games

Back in the day, when we were sailing under the rule of six, and the club were cheating by opening up the diving compound to get another six sailing; it was decided to have another chairman's challenge. Nice and simple, build a boat out of rubbish, no RC. Just a free sailer.

Challenge set, and we had a date set. On that particular grotty cold day, a few brave enough to try their hand turned up to sail their monstrosities!

John Lamkin won a prize without his boat even getting wet, (for the most over engineered piece of tat). Pete James made a boat out of a plank, and some lead. No idea where the sails came from. Harvey made a paper boat. Pete C made a rubber band boat out of a takeaway container. ... Several other boats made it to the starting line. Pete James started to sail the best, Jon Allen, once he modified his boat, also sailed. Harvey's just bobbed on the water. Pete Cs takeaway rubber band went 5ft from the shore, run out of power and stayed there, all while the other boats just plodded around the diving area.

In true LDMBC style, every entrant won a prize, be it jelly babies or Trebor soft mints! Might even do another event later in the year, just for the hell of it! See pictures below.

Pete Carmen





SS FRANCE 1960

The Ship

The Trans-Atlantic liner **France** was laid down at the French shipbuilders **Chantiers de l'Atlantique** at St Nazaire on 7 Sept 1957. She was named and launched by Madame Yvonne de Gaulle on 11 May 1960. Once fitted out she sailed on her first Atlantic voyage from St Nazaire, to Southampton and New York on 3 Feb 1962.

She was the longest passenger liner in the world this record was only broken by the introduction of the Queen **Mary 2** in 2004.

Dimensions; Length 1,035.6 ft (315.66m) OA; Beam 110.6 ft; Draught 34.4 ft.

Displacement; 51,815 tons,

Propulsion; Geared CEM-Parsons turbines driving 4 shafts, later reduced to 2 shafts
160,000 shaft horsepower.

Speed; 30 knots Stabilisers; 2 each side automatically correcting for rolling.

Accommodation; 407 First class, 1,637 Tourist class. Later changed to one class throughout. **Crew;** 1253

Cost; 1960 US\$ 80 million approx.

She was owned and operated by the **Compagnie General Transatlantique** (CGT or French Line) she served as a Trans-Atlantic liner and also as a cruise ship all around the world. Being too large for the Panama and Suez canals she had to take the longer routes.

Her most striking features were the funnels. The elegant fins were carefully designed to exhaust the smoke on either side of the ship and catch the up-draught away from the decks.

Special filters removed any smuts which were then collected and pumped out of the ship underwater. This would raise eyebrows nowadays.

She was fitted out in luxurious modern style and was a showcase for French design and art. Modern materials such as aluminium, Formica and plastics were employed to also meet new fire regulations and save weight. As one would expect, the large area devoted to the kitchens was the latest in modern design. There was a 12-metre stove and 180 of France's best chefs. An extensive wine cellar. She was known as "*The best French restaurant in the world*"

France had all the facilities that are commonplace on modern cruise ships, such as theatres, cinemas, large full width dining rooms, a library, sauna, swimming pools gymnasias, large smoking rooms and enclosed promenade decks.

Many notable French artists were commissioned to decorate the walls and provide pieces of art. Pablo Picasso produced 2 ceramics.

The ship was however completed at a time of great change in travel. The advent of transatlantic air travel was taken up by the wealthy who were also the very same people the France wanted aboard.

France was converted to a single class and began cruising, hoping to attract the wealthier holiday trade. This trade dwindled, until she was laid up in 1974.

In 1979, she was sold to **Norwegian Caribbean Line** for \$18 million and renamed **Norway**. She was renovated & refitted as a cruise ship at Bremerhaven costing \$80 million. Her propulsion was reduced to 2 screws and was fitted with bow and stern thrusters. Two more decks were built above the main deck to add more cabins.

A serious boiler explosion in 2003 put Norway out of commission until hastily repaired. The end was in sight. In March 2004 it was decided to sell the ship to NCL's parent company **Star Cruises**. After a brief career cruising, she was sold to **Bridgend Shipping of Monrovia**, renamed **Blue Lady** and eventually towed to Alang in Gujarat, India where she was beached and dismantled for scrap.

A section of her bow is now on display at Paris Yacht Marina in Paris.

The Model

This **Airfix** plastic kit is at scale 1:600. Measuring some 530mm long. It represents the SS France as built in 1960.

The model was bought from H.A. Blunt's shop in Welwyn Garden City in 1967.

First Build 1967

I wanted it to actually sail, but radio control was in its infancy and rather large, heavy, and expensive. Living in digs in WGC and a student apprentice, I didn't have much money. I settled for a free running model with one motor driving 4 shafts through a simple homemade gearbox, all powered by 2 x C alkaline batteries.

Being a tall ship with very little below the waterline, in order to keep it upright I added a tin plate fin keel with brass torpedo shaped bulb.

I sailed it in Black Fan lagoon WGC, taking quite a risk that it might not come back to where I set it off. However, all was well. When I joined the WGCSME, I sailed it at Stanborough lakes in club regattas in the early 1970s. After which it was put away in the loft for the next 45 years.

The Refit 2020

My interest in converting small plastic ship kits to radio control gave me the idea to have another go at the France and see if modern small radio equipment could be fitted. The model was very dirty and a bit battered, but I stripped out the old motor, gearbox and shafts and began the re-fit.

The original model with batteries and keel weighed 340g when floating at the waterline. Taking out all the fittings, the hull, superstructure and keel it then weighed 250g. Thus, any fittings such as motor, servo, batteries, receiver and esc must weigh no more than 100g to float at the correct waterline.

The original gearbox was very noisy and not efficient. I decided to use 4 x **escape** miniature motors, one for each shaft. They weighed 3.3g each.

The **23g Mtronics Viper 10** ESC I usually use was too heavy, so I stripped down an old **Futaba** servo and utilised the circuitry as the ESC. This weighed only 7.5g. The 2.4 GHz **Absima** receiver was very light at 7g, as was the tiny **KM02A King Max** servo from **Component Shop** at 3.3g.

I used 4 x AAA Ni-MH rechargeable batteries in a battery holder resting on the bottom of the hull to increase stability. These are the heaviest parts adding 51.2g.

I used the minimum of polystyrene for bracketry for the servo, motor mounts and etc. When finally completed, with all the plastic, fittings and added wiring and servo linkage the whole lot came to 95g Just about right!!

The propellers in the kit were no longer serviceable as some blades had been lost.

To my knowledge there are no suppliers of scale propellers of the size needed.

My son and I have equal shares in a **3D printer**, so I resorted to 3D printing the props.

The program for the 4 blade and 5 blade left and right hand props were designed on **Solidworks** software, and then tried out on our 3D printer using ABS filament material. After a couple of design iterations, a workable set of props were made. They were tidied up with a scalpel, eye glass and steady hand. The printed surface was smoothed with Acetone.

A test floatation in the bath found that the hull rested at the correct depth and level fore and aft. However, the original keel was not keeping the ship sufficiently upright for sailing in any wind. I made a new thin brass fin around 30mm longer and kept the same weight at the end. The increased righting moment solved the stability issue.

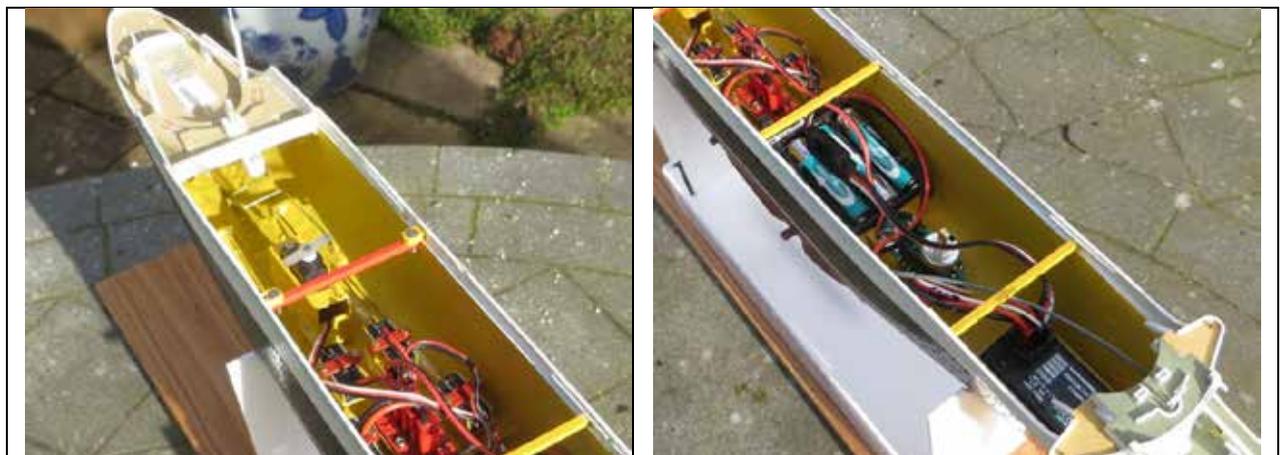
I found the overall paintwork was damaged and stained, so it was treated to a spruce up including a respray of the hull bottom with red lead primer.

Various deck fittings were reconstructed. France now looked tidy and fit for use.

The test sailing in my local pond in Potton was successful. France sails at a leisurely pace and answers the rudder well, but strong breezes tend to blow her off course. The 'engine room' was also found to be very much quieter!

It was good to see my 50+ year old model back on the water.

Incidentally, I have heard that because of a factory fire that destroyed the mould tools, Airfix are unable to re-issue this kit unless it is re-tooled. This puts this model into the 'rare as hen's teeth' category, hence the silly prices on eBay! Some pictures follow of the actual completed model.



<p>Rudder Servo and Motors</p> 	<p>Batteries and Modified Servo/ESC</p> 
<p>Servo/ESC and Receiver</p> 	<p>New 3D Printed Propellers</p> 
<p>Finn Keel</p>	<p>Completed Vessel on the Water</p>

Peter Le Sueur

Welwyn Garden City Society of Model Engineers

ARTHUR BEALE'S IS CLOSING DOWN

The ship's chandler is leaving its home in London's Shaftesbury Avenue after 500 years and with it goes another bit of character from the capital. The business started as rope-maker, John Buckingham, on the Fleet river at the start of the 16th century. In the early 19th century, they had premises at number 6 in the Middle Row of St Giles, an impressive terrace in the middle of Broad Street but had to move when this was demolished in 1843. They then operated from premises on Shaftesbury Avenue when John Buckingham and then the new proprietor, Arthur Beale, were exclusive suppliers of climbing rope to early members of the Alpine Club. This was made to the club's specification so that it was both light and strong, being made from three strands of manila hemp, treated to be rot proof and marked with a red thread of worsted yarn. This rope was used for British expeditions to Mount Everest and Antarctica. It also supplied ice axes to polar explorer, Ernest Shackleton; the flagpole for Buckingham Palace and rigging for escapologists and the window displays of Selfridges department store.



Below is a 'monkey's fist' with an eye splice, custom made at Arthur Beale's.



The business now trades mainly as a yacht chandler, stocking and supplying nautical equipment such as a monkey's fist (a weighted ball of rope used for line-throwing). To support the retailing, they have a workshop downstairs, where they produce special orders for ropes and rigging. This business was declining but, in 2014, veteran sailor and theatrical chandler, Alasdair Flint, took over with business partner Gerry Jeatt with plans to revive it. The range of products was broadened to include nautical clothing, books and

novelties such as ship's biscuits. Other new activities included courses and presentations, stands at boat shows and improved windows displays.

The Covid-19 pandemic depressed retail activity in central London and the business could not then sustain the rental cost of the shop in Shaftesbury Avenue. A new management team of Hugh Taylor and James Keef plan to move the business online from a warehouse base in Buckinghamshire. This would then be supported by more limited retailing in London such as a pop-up shop at Christmas time.

Eugenia Bell, writing in *The Traditional Shops and Restaurants of London*, praised the establishment:

The teal shop front matches the pegboards inside, festooned with gleaming brass shackles, bolts and hooks of every size and description. Spools of ropes adorn all sides of the store and rigging is still assembled in a downstairs workshop. Beale's is a stunning shop, as much for its incongruity as for its dazzling display.

In 1999, *Time Out* likewise commented on their incongruity but praised the range of nautical equipment:

There are some odd shops in London, but few beat the surprise factor of finding a yacht chandler in Shaftesbury Avenue. Arthur Beale is a retail survivor, hanging on long after many of the other chandlers went bust. It may look old-fashioned and it stubbornly holds out against this new fangled internet thing but the stock is as useful now as it ever was for sailors in the distant past.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Saturday	July 3 rd	Working Party
Monday	July 12 th	Night Sail
Sunday	July 18 th	Northampton
Saturday	July 24 th	Sale in Wardown Lake Compound
Saturday	July 31 st	Working Party
Sat/Sunday	7/8 th August	Fenny Stratford
Monday	August 9 th	Night Sail
Sunday	August 15 th	Meal???