

“Canterbury-J Chin-Wag” Canterbury J-Class Owners Association (CJCOA)

11 June 2020 Day 78 from lockdown Edition#17

Hi J-Skippers

Sailing again. At the beginning of winter. Great to be back on the water – with physical distancing – and with hand sanitiser – and with coughing hygiene – and with contact tracing sheet – and with a limit on the numbers in the group!



But there is more to moving boats by wind power. Have you ever thought of making a steam engine? Well then, have a look at this incredible story from Ralph.

Ralph Biggs and his Amazing Model Boats



Ralph tells us about the collection of models which he has built since retiring in 1998.

The Biggs family have had a connection with the T. S.S. Earnslaw sailing on Lake Wakatipu from the time it was first built at John McGregor Engineering works in Dunedin. My great grandfather was employed as fitter there and helped build it first in Dunedin and then assembly it in 1911 at Kingston at the south end of Lake Wakatipu.

It was launched in 1912.

The Earnslaw



I decided to build the Earnslaw and try my hand at building a steam powered model. The model needed to be large enough to house the steam engine a boiler and a gas canister to fire the boiler.

The Earnslaw is 168 feet long [51.47 metres] the beam is 24 feet [7.315 metres] I had no plans but plenty of photos and dimensions from which I drew up my model building plans. The scale of about 38-to-1 gave a

model length of 1.347 meters. I increased the beam out of scale by 30 mm and the depth of the hull by 40 mm. to accommodate the boiler and give the model a bit more stability.

I made a four cylinder oscillating steam plant which turned twin counter rotating props. Steaming trials went well and scale speed was quite realistic until the boiler pressure dropped, I tried several ways of firing the boiler without any success so changed to an electric motor which is a much easier way to sail my Earnslaw.

The photo shows the Earnslaw steaming on her maiden voyage 30th. August 2004.

Henry's Lady



Still wishing to have a working steam boat I adapted a plan from Model Boats magazine with the intention of building the African Queen. After borrowing a video of the film from the library and seeing how scruffy the African Queen was I decided on an open launch and named it Henry's Lady.

Since the sailings I have improved the performance by installing a variable pitch propeller which allows for going astern. The photo of Henry's Lady shows her steaming on Lake Victoria.

Clipper Ship Cutty Sark



My next project was the Clipper Ship Cutty Sark. I had plans in a 1930s Model Engineer magazine and scaled them up to make an easy transportable fully rigged model over all 950mm long. Sailing conditions require fairly light winds, I have installed an electric motor and prop which helps going to windward.

Bournemouth Queen



My latest project is the paddle steamer Bournemouth Queen, again the plans came from the Model Engineer. The model is 1130mm long propelled by a reversible electric motor which gives a realistic turn of speed.

Who else is making model boats? – please let us know.

Henry's Lady photos

What a wonderful piece of craftsmanship.



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Rodney Ford – Windsurfer



We all have a sailing story. Windsurfing is where I got most of my sailing experience. Being attached to the board with foot straps, and being hitched to the boom with a harness, you become part of the craft. But there is the ever-present threat of being torn in half by a sudden and unexpected squall!

My father was in the Navy (Lieutenant Commander) and was always keen on boats. I learned the art of sailing in Poole Harbour, England. However, the biggest learning for me was that more time is spent doing painting, repairing and maintenance, than doing the actual sailing.

In the Navy my Dad said there are only two rules:
“If it moves - salute it. If it doesn’t move - paint it!”



Model Yacht sailing suits me a lot better!
However, boat storage is now competing with my guitar storage.

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This is the 17th edition.

Keep your submissions coming.
Add your memories to these stories.

Happy sailing, Rodney Ford, (Canterbury-J ChinWag editor)
On behalf of your Canterbury J Class Owners Association. CJCOA

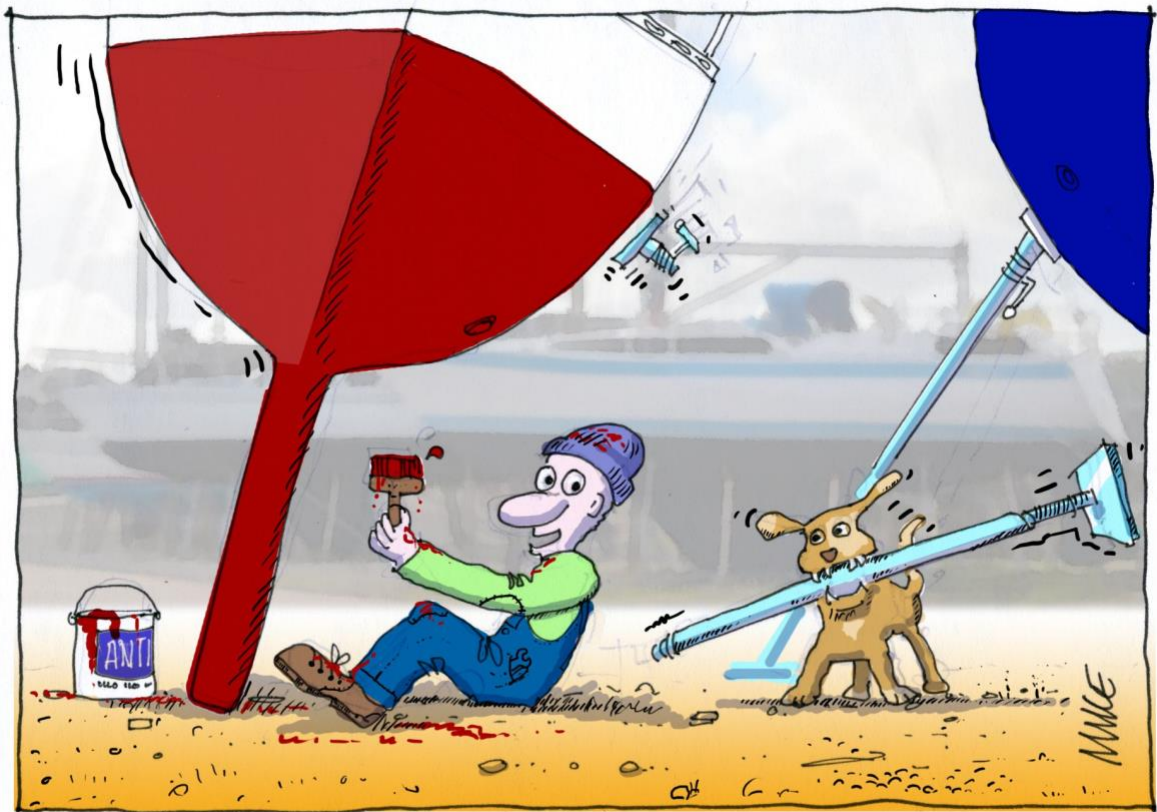
The mystery of the unknown schooner will be revealed next week.

QUIZZ – WHO? WHERE? WHEN?

Who can enlighten me about these photos – kindly lent to me by Ian Scott.



Enjoy these quips



"Hello Boy! What's that you've got there?"