

# The Mainsheet



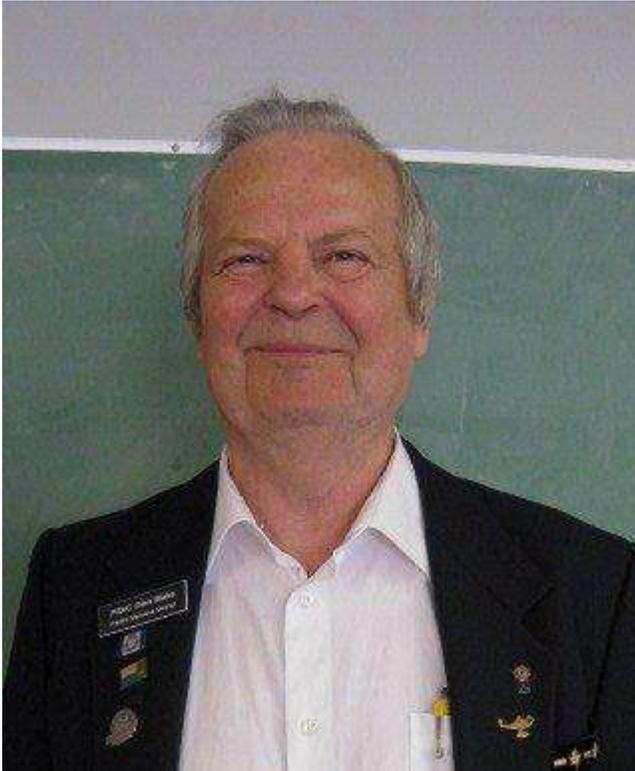
**Summer 2015**

**Royal City Squadron**

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## Commander's Page



I attended the Pacific Mainland District change of watch and annual general meeting this past weekend and am pleased to announce Royal City Squadron received the award for the squadron with the highest member renewal rate in the District. Thanks to all of you who renewed your membership in time to be counted this year. We had an 88% renewal rate compared to the District average of 76%. Well done.

I would like you to join me in welcoming our new members from Olympia; Squadron Commander Viki and Past Commander Chuck Sharp.



A big thanks all those who agreed to serve on the bridge or committees this year. As a volunteer organization our success or failure is dependent on our members participation.

To paraphrase the late President Kennedy:  
"Ask not what your Squadron can do for you  
but what you can do for your Squadron."

The boating season is now if full swing and I look forward to seeing you on the water.  
Glen.

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## Words From the Editor

This issue finally gelled. With all the formalities of AGM and CoW behind us we can now start thinking about summer and some serious boating.

In this issue we are looking at some recent events on the River and within the squadron.

On the water there are some changes from last year. Vancouver Traffic is now Victoria Traffic and the operators are located in Pat Bay. Tofino Coast Guard Radio is no longer. All circuits have been moved to Prince Rupert, so the entire west coast of the Island, Haida Gwaii, and the Central and North Coasts are covered by Prince Rupert Coast Guard Radio.

The freshet in the River is almost absent this year. I note that the current still reverses on a high tide, which is great for us that are held hostage to river currents!

Your editor will be leaving early July if all goes per plan, and likely returning in October.

Until then, happy cruising, ....Erik.  
Email: [ve7mdl@gmail.com](mailto:ve7mdl@gmail.com)

## From the office of Social Affairs

### New Westminster Police Visit the Royal City Squadron

No, we did not do anything wrong. Constables Stu Hagen and Dave Hill gave a nice presentation about the New Westminster Police Marine Unit.



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The unit is active on an as needed basis since the officers have normal duties on land. The jurisdiction is basically the New Westminster waterfront, but they will at times be tasked to assist neighbouring units. Their boat is the “Shaw-1” (formerly “MP-1”), which is a rigid-hull inflatable boat (RIB).

The presentation was a bit of a revelation. Apparently, there is very little police presence on the River due to lack of staff and equipment. We are still the Wild West.

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## You Can't Stretch Power

Here is a photo to show you what happened on our boat when we were away. I regularly check the boat before leaving and everything was okay. The only thing using power on our boat while away was the Pro-sine Smart charger drawing about 1 amp.

When we returned from Quebec, I did my usual checks on our boat to find out that there was no shore power. The new smart plug was fried at the wiring and was totally gone. This was at the boat connection end, which left some black stains on the fibreglass and severe blackening at the receptacle. Fortunately the boat survived. Some lessons learned:

- The shore power cord was too tight, although it did not seem that much, and after normal movement eventually pulled back from the plug. The cord also is connected as a straight out, therefore bending occurs due to normal movement.
- The so called breaker is a self-resetting device, therefore can continually re-set until something goes.



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This is a 30 amp connector and has plastic clamps internally to secure the cord; somehow they eventually let go.

Apparently the 50 amp version has a more secure fastening system. Also it is a good idea to secure the cord to the hull with a kellum grip, or some other device. I have been in contact with Dolphin Insurance. The important message here is to keep checking your equipment and not always trust that it will perform as expected.

Submitted by Patrick Sweetnam

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## Power that did Stretch

Another power problem, which could have had a fatal outcome happened in April. The sailing vessel Lota, a boat with some serious offshore cruising time behind it, came into Annacis Channel under the high voltage power lines that cross at Purfleet Point.

The boat has a very tall mast and while the clearance under the power lines is 34 metres in the main channel, it is only 25 metres in Annacis Channel. This difference is easy to miss on a chart crowded with symbols and text.

As a result, the top of the mast got too close to the power lines and a substantial current

passed through the boat. Fortunately, no person was hurt, but all the electronics have apparently been destroyed. The only visible sign from the outside is the charred flag pole on top of the mast. The boat is currently hauled at Shelter Island Marina.



This is a good place for a reminder that a spark can jump a metre or more from a high voltage power line to anything that is connected to the water – especially so when the humidity is high.

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## Sinking in the River

In one of the many interesting presentations organized by the Social Officer, a marine insurance company representative told us that the vast majority of vessels sinking actually happen not underway, but at the dock.

And so it was an early morning at 0430 May 12<sup>th</sup> when the ex-seine fishing vessel Western Crusader sank at Shelter Island Marina while waiting to get lifted out. There were two people on board who fortunately escaped unharmed, but with little in the way of clothing or personal belongings.



Because of some obvious signs of diesel leaking into the water, the Coast Guard

Environmental Response unit was called and deployed spill containment booms. The Hovercraft Moytel checked for diesel spill in Annacis Channel and just outside Don and Lion Islands without finding any significant amounts.

However, the press heard the magic words “oil spill” and showed up in full force with cameras and portable microwave links smelling blood (well, diesel, anyway) hoping to fuel another scandal as a follow up to the bunker fuel spill in Vancouver Harbour.

Several attempts to raise the vessel were made in the following few days. A crane was brought in by Vancouver Pile Driving. They tried to lift the aft end of the boat and then pumps were deployed to evacuate the hull, but to no avail. It turns out that the boat does not have watertight bulkheads, so pumping was futile.

A dive unit with airbags showed up the next day, trying to place the airbags inside the hull and pump air to lift the vessel. They gave up after less than a day.

As of May 27<sup>th</sup> the boat is still in the water a few feet away from Shelter Island Marina’s West Dock. Apparently, a larger crane is required, but in the meantime, the owner is out of funds and has no insurance.

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## From the Training Department

### Update from the River

A new dinghy dock has been installed in Bedford Channel. It is located halfway between Tavistock Point and the bridge connecting McMillan Island the Fort Langley.



(The observant reader will notice that this picture also appeared in the May issue of Pacific Yachting).

Bedford Channel between Tavistock Point and this new dock is a well protected anchorage and worth a visit. The new dock is about 15 minutes walk from Fort Langley which has several good eateries and a great grocery store. The store was recently rebuilt after a fire.



Training Officer: Glen 604-525-1751.

15 people passed the ROC-M exam this spring. Congratulations!

Advanced Piloting is planned to start September 22<sup>nd</sup>.

### Benefits of DSC

Many of you have a radio with Digital Selective Calling (DSC). All fixed-mount VHF radios sold on the market today have this feature. A DSC radio is easily recognizable by the red distress button accessible by lifting a small lid.

One of the major benefits of a DSC radio is that a distress call can be made very quickly. Simply lift the lid and push and hold the distress button for 3-5 seconds. A distress call will be sent out which will cause an alarm to sound on all DSC radios in the area.

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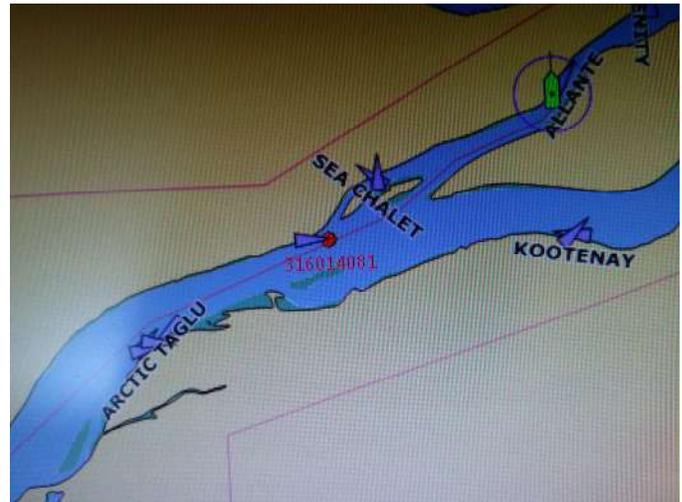
There is, however, a caveat. The radio must be programmed with an assigned Maritime Marine Service Identifier (MMSI) and connected to a GPS. Unfortunately, only about 10% of boaters have bothered to do that.

Obtaining a MMSI is free and not at all complicated. Just Google for “Industry Canada MMSI” and fill in the form for vessels. You should receive your boat’s very own MMSI within a few days.

Now connect the GPS. It is only two wires! Sure, you can connect them with the incorrect polarity, in which case the GPS position does not show on the radio, then just reverse the polarity. No damage will have been done.

To test that the DSC function works, enter the call (or DSC) menu on the radio and locate the DSC test function. Enter 003160011 for the destination (which is Victoria Coast Guard Radio) and send the test call off. You should get a reply within a few seconds.

You can also connect the NMEA 0183 output of the radio to a chart plotter or navigation program. This will allow the chart plotter or navigation program to display a position of any DSC distress call that is received by the radio. See the picture



The picture is from a particular navigation program, Coastal Explorer. It displays a red dot for the location of the vessel in distress and its MMSI. AIS is also connected to this particular program, which accounts for the vessels shown on the chart.

The program will show the same red dot when it receives a position reply from a vessel. Other navigation programs or chart plotters may show different icons.

Useful, right? No need to plot the received GPS position on the chart. It is done for you. It only requires two wires to connect between the radio and the chart plotter or computer.

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## Hydrographics Update

CHS is in the final stages of issuing new editions of the following local charts:

**Chart 3534 – Plans Howe Sound (Shoal Channel – depth caution)**

**Chart 3540 – Approaches to Campbell River**

CHS will be working within Vancouver Harbour and the Fraser River to enhance a network of tide gauges to better define the movement of water in these areas. The end goal is the delivery of real time tidal data and near term predictions over AIS.

As many of you already know, the 2015 edition of the Tide & Current Tables shows tidal heights in metres and tenths only. This was apparently not a cost saving measure but was considered in the best interest of yachtsmen and commercial operators. This measure is being reconsidered in light of considerable opposition from the recreational boaters and because there are still about 6 Imperial Unit charts on the West Coast and 50 such charts on the East Coast. This matter is on the agenda for the next RBAC meeting scheduled for April 01, 2015.

Dave Prince, former Manager of Nautical Publications, has recently been appointed the new Director for the Pacific Region.

## BC Ferries Update

Construction of the new Denman Island cable ferry is well underway. Completion is scheduled for April 15 and sea trials are set for June 15, 2015.

## Coast Guard Update

The long standing situation of the obscured sector light at Cape Mudge is about to be resolved. CCG will be establishing shore based sector light to work in conjunction with main sector light in order to provide the required coverage. Design work and property negotiations are largely complete and the new light has undergone testing in Victoria. It is anticipated that the new sector light combination will be operational this year.

CCG Western Region has just taken delivery of two new Mid Shore Patrol Vessels. The new vessels, the CCGS Martin Charles and CCGS Captain Goddard, are 43 metre Hero Class ships.

Martin Charles, a Hereditary Chief of the Nitinat Band (Bamfield), was very active in west coast search and rescue and died in a crash of a rescue helicopter.

Captain Nichola Goddard was the first female Canadian soldier killed in action in Afghanistan in 2006.

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## RCS Bridge 2014

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Leisa Blake 604-444-2684

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Don Swindells 604-720-5170

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Barbara Blake 604-525-1751

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Glen Blake 604-525-1751

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Communications & Phone:

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David Witham 604-420-2924

The **Mainsheet** is the official newsletter of the Royal City Power and Sail Squadron. It is written by and for its members

**Canadian Power and Sail Squadrons(CPS)** is a nationwide association of boating enthusiasts, dedicated to improving boating safety through training.

Each year, CPS members teach a variety of courses to concerned boaters in the general public across Canada. CPS is well known for its [Boating Course](#), which is the primary course offered to the public. The Boating Course is just one of the many [courses](#) offered by Royal City Squadron.

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