

## January 2010 Winter Newsletter

### Scale Captain's Chat

#### *Greetings Everyone,*

Firstly I would like to wish you all a **Very Happy New Year**. In December we had an excellent Christmas lunch at the South Lawn Hotel, and the raffle raised £100 for "Help the Heroes" and £52 for "MacMillan Nurses". Our thanks to Lorna for organising the event.

I am pleased to report that, following my operation, my hand is now well on the mend and I hope to be back at the pond on a regular basis on Sundays, but due to work commitments my visits to the pond on Thursdays will be few at the moment.

I raised the member comments and concerns from the AGM regarding the Annual Exhibition at Highcliffe and I am pleased to report that most have been addressed to the RNLI branch's best ability on matters within their control, and it has been decided to hold the event again this year. The date will be Saturday 13th March, 10am till 4pm (set up from 8.30am), we will have an additional hall this year so hopefully we can spread out a little more. Please come along and show your work and remember that we are not there to judge each other, it is good to see all your models even those you are still building, it is all of interest, so please don't be shy. If you could let me know if you will be attending it will help with the layout preparations. Last year we raised a record amount for the RNLI! Perhaps we can beat that this year?

**Membership renewal is due on 1st April** and you can pay at the exhibition if you wish (no membership fee increase is planned for this year).

We hope to have the new Programme fully finalised soon (see "Dates for Your Diary" below); the usual favourites will all be there and members' info leaflets will be available together with the info also being put on the web site. We will be holding our Steering Competitions as usual, if you have never tried come along and have a go it is just pure fun and we will even talk you around the course, all you have to do is steer your boat. **IT REALLY IS JUST FOR FUN.**

Don't forget that the AGM will be on 7<sup>th</sup> April this year at The Sports Pavilion, Vaggs Lane, Hordle starting at 7.30pm. This is your chance to have your say and put forward your ideas in the running of the club please come along if you can.

Well that's all for now folks. Enjoy this newsletter which is to Peter's usual high standard and have a great summer.

*David*



A photo from the past: the Scale Captain with one of our founding club members (now sadly deceased).

---

## Dates for your diary: 2010 Club Events

13th March (Saturday): Annual Club Exhibition, Methodist Hall, Highfield.

1st April: 2010 Club Subscriptions due (see end of Newsletter)

7th April (Wednesday) Club AGM, The Pavilion, Vaggs Lane, Hordle (7.30pm)

May 9th (Sunday) Vintage Yacht Group visit Setley Pond. Club Sailing OK.

June 6th (Sunday) Steering Competition - Richard Graham Trophy: 9.30am start.

June 27th (Sunday) Navy Day at Setley Pond: 9.30am start

July 30th - Aug 1st (Friday - Sunday) Navy Days at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard. (For info only, No general club participation although David McNair-Taylor will be exhibiting).

August: Lymington Lifeboat Day - Club Stand, Lymington Lifeboat Station (details later).

August 22nd: Steering Competition - Solent Cup: 9.30am start.

December (Date TBA) Christmas Lunch / Social

---

## Editorial

**Welcome to the New Year** and, as the photo demonstrates, a more solid pond! I'm writing this on the 17th January and the ponds only now thawing. It was first frozen just before Christmas, indeed even on Christmas day, but fortunately thawed by Boxing Day for the "**Setley Cup and Seahorse Trophy Junior Model Yacht Regatta**".

I suspect many SRCMBC members have not heard of this event which has been organised by the Royal Lymington Yacht Club each Boxing Day for the past 50 years. The yachts are free sailed across the pond in a series of races in two classes; monohulls and multihulls. Boat designs range from home constructions based on soft drinks bottles to store bought RC yacht

conversions. If you fancy something different on Boxing Day morning it's worth a trip to the pond, but if you want to park near the pond... get there early! As the photo suggests, a lot of people turn up!



Ice and snow at Setley Pond, 10th January 2010  
(Photo: David McNair-Taylor)



The **2010 Setley Pond Calendar** proved very popular; in all, 62 copies were printed and they sold out. Unfortunately I know that a few members were disappointed not to get a copy for which I apologise. In order to be able to offer the calendars at a sensible price (it was £8.50 this year) I have to order the calendars in bulk around the start of October to take advantage of "early orders" promotions (the full price for a single calendar would be £20). We sell the calendars at cost price so if I order too many the club would lose money on any that are unsold. Next year I will include an order form with the Summer Newsletter to allow you to reserve your copies, remember to make use of it!

On a personal basis, I'm going to be away for about 4 weeks from the last week in January, so please excuse the lack of Club Web Site updates... normal service will be resumed in March!

*Peter Taylor, Your Editor.*

---

## News

### More Model Shop Discounts



Milford Models and Hobbies is now owned and run by Nigel Harper. Nigel is keen to discover and support the needs of model boat builders and he has joined the Club. The shop address is 48 High Street, Milford on Sea, Hampshire, SO41 0QD (open Tuesday - Saturday, 10am - 5pm). Phone: 01590 642112, email: [mmhmos@ymail.com](mailto:mmhmos@ymail.com). SRCMBC members get a 10% discount (5% on purchases less than £100).

---

## Hints and Tips

### The WORKSHOP

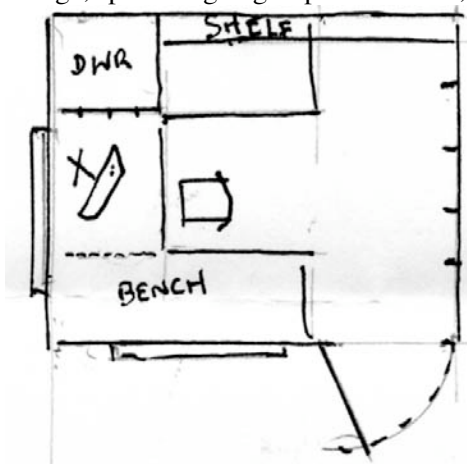
Well, what is a Workshop then? According to Websters' International Dictionary: "n. a room or building in which production work or manufacture on a small scale is carried out". The next entry is *work-shy*: "adj. lazy!" Now I would say that is relatively accurate in terms of scale modelling, one has first of all to make a truly conscientious decision in order to become a modeller with a capital 'M'...

You're either going to do it or maybe just think about it. In either case of the definition above, the choice is at the end of the day entirely your own. Once having made this weighty decision the next question is "What, ..When... ..and Where?" After many years experience at being interested in many past-times and projects the venture into Scale Building of a fantastic model is I find mainly based on an idea or a memory with hindsight or more accurately eye-sight. A picture, a photo, a drawing - film, book or story from the past history of this maritime nation of ours.



As to when - well one has to consider the summer period when the climate is pleasant and the going is easy but this can be affected by other plans such as Golf, Cricket, Cycling, Sailing or Boating, OR the kids outings! The alternative is the winter season when it is fine, to shut yourself off from the household chores, the mother-in-law and the decorating programme which the wife seems to find urgently needs attention. Then having laid out the 'ships' plans on the kitchen table to view the arrangement of the scantline ("naut. word - planks") - suddenly YOU are in her way !!

Ah-ha, then if it is going to happen one must essentially have a place for tools, tables and tackle, etc., drills, spills and thrills. The last being "I will have to build/buy a shed down the garden" - what will this cost me? A search around the adverts will provide a solution eventually. If you are lucky to have a large, spacious garage - power source, little effort is required to make a quick action plan. A



conversion from a Utility Room is also welcome but may be used by the housekeeper for drying smalls, towels or the kids wet clothes. The only real escape is to buy say a 6x8ft shed (1.9 x 2.7 m) in dried, treated pine which is "Portable" - no planning permission! Dry and insulated, lined inside with glass-fibre insulation to keep the damp out. Good daylight over work areas, a view of the garden / potato patch, well positioned on hard standing with electrical mains sockets on all sides. The working height of "the bench" has to be carefully studied with respect to chair height and working surface available. I found that the "three sides" arrangement works well - by that I mean this specification as follows... One surface near the door, under a window is suitable for fixing with small machinery.



A vertical static drill platform is a boon. The wall area for small boxes/cartons for items like Humbrol paints, wiring, switches, cordage and even motors and control gear. The centre surface is for the actual module construction necessary using small tools and clamps etc. and must be under good lighting. On the opposite side or rear wall of said shack/workshop/shed/hideout are several shelves of varying width. These are mainly for storage of old coffee jars (Nescafe) or tea tins if your taste is for less caffeine - containing screws, bolts, rivets and stainless or alloy /brass of all gauges and sizes. You will soon find that you need somewhere to keep that "useful item" and battery drills. Underneath the surfaces I have two old butchers' sturdy tables ( ex Auction Sales) for where the completed models will be stored eventually. If any space remains in the floor area the odd, grinder, sander and other finishing tools can be put where they get easily cluttered up together!

On the fourth wall it is sometimes convenient to rack the odd yacht mast, sails, long pieces of plastic dowels and alloy rodding, plus where the working plan can be hung on a board. In a corner of a table top a suitable chest of four drawers (ex Auctions) is useful for small hand tools, files, drill bits, fittings and brackets and that odd item "that might come in useful some day".

All this is only an outline - but is basically my 'place' where I can go and leave the drama and stress behind me for some peace and quiet on my own. The dear wife is respectfully asked to knock or cough at the door in case I am working with care and detail on that tiny davit for the Tug - will it ever be finished for next year? My tip is only to work on the project when you are mindful and ready, and feel like doing that tricky bit you have been working on. Avoid getting stressed up when there are diversions and family circumstances or situations which can upset your attention to detail.



At the end of the day- week or twelve month - you will find a sense of achievement will give you the satisfaction of a job well done and admired. Who knows your craft may even pass the final test - FLOAT and GO PLACES!! Go forth my children and get to work on that project!

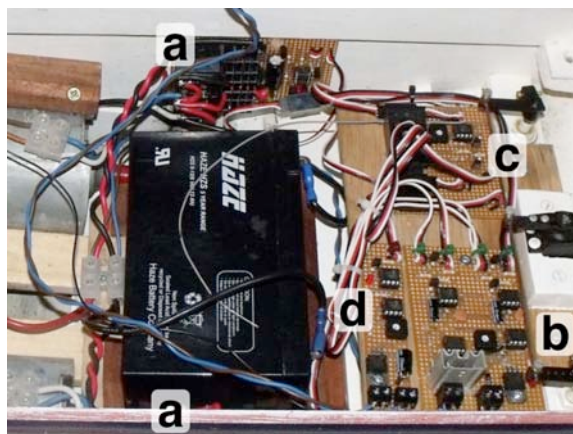
## *The Ponderer.*

---

### **More Wires Than Wood – overdoing electronics the SRCMBC way!**

2009 was a very productive year for me on the marine electronics front. Ken Dyer offered his newly built Tug as a test bed for all manner of electronic devices that I was keen to develop. In return, whilst I was busy with my soldering iron, he kindly took a major role in continuing and finishing the Springer tug that I'd not long since started.

This activity began around April and by September we both had tugs similarly fitted out with twin home made speed controllers [a], engine sound units [b], rudder mixers [c], and horns [d] – the bracketed letters refer to the photo (right) to aid identification of the various units. Along the way I also developed a servo controller for operating deck-mounted guns and cranes as seen on various of Tony Crollie's boats and Fran Oakey's Perkasa; a “reverse tamer” for Barry Coyston's German Police Harbour Launch; a speed limiter for Ian Holliday's very swift Huntsman which also allows his uni-directional brushless motor controller to run in

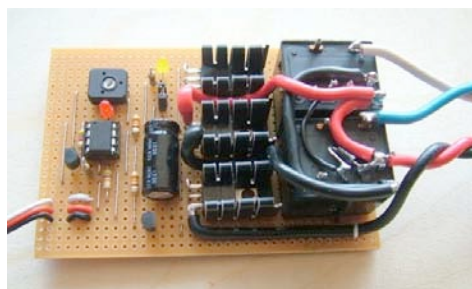


*The [still to be tidied] innards of my Springer Tug*

reverse; a logarithmic law throttle control for another of Tony Crollie's gunboats (this permits finer low speed control at the expense of high speed control being more coarse); a wailing siren with flashing blue LEDs for John Sherwood's Police Launch; and finally a morse code flasher (programmable with real messages) which failed to interest anyone at all, apart from me that is!

All the electronic projects described here are based around the PICAXE micro-controller chip and most of the hard work is done in software. The chip is programmed in the BASIC language which is quick and easy to understand and learn. Also, the particular dialect of BASIC used by the PICAXE chip is rich in functions intended for RC use. It should be noted that one of my PICAXE disciples knocked out a number of his own very successful designs this year – well done Ray Hellicar!

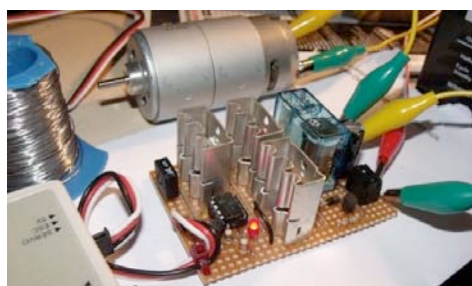
### 12V, 30A ESC



The ESCs use twin 30A single pole automotive relays to effect reversing. When a change in direction is sensed, the motor power is cut for 250mSec before operating the relays, followed by a further 250mSec delay before power is re-applied. This prevents the relay contacts arcing and prolongs their life. Paul Cooper of Technobots in Totton, a veteran of the TV series “Robot Wars”, tried out two of these units in one of his smaller robots and was unable to destroy them, unlike the well known marine ESCs they

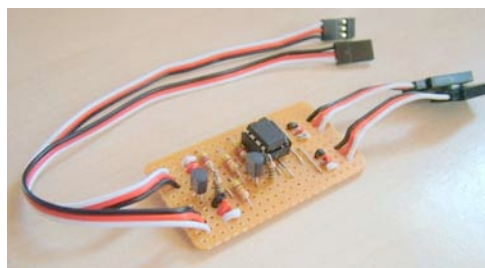
replaced! My ESC also features a 'gain' control ranging from 25% to 125% of nominal to match the ESC to the channel range of the transmitter, and/or “cool down” fast boats for safer operation by novices.

### 6V, 10A ESC



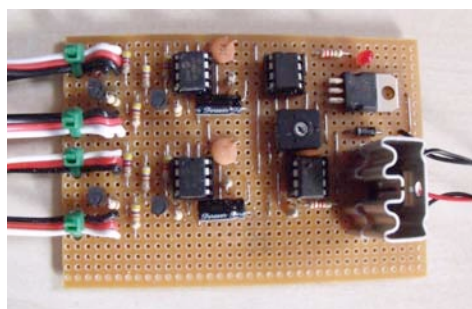
The automotive relays require 12v to operate them of course, which wasn't a problem for Ken or myself, but mindful of lesser requirements I also created a 6v version using a 10A double pole relay – seen here undergoing test. Alan Furness has kindly volunteered to be the guinea pig for this unit.

### Rudder Mixer



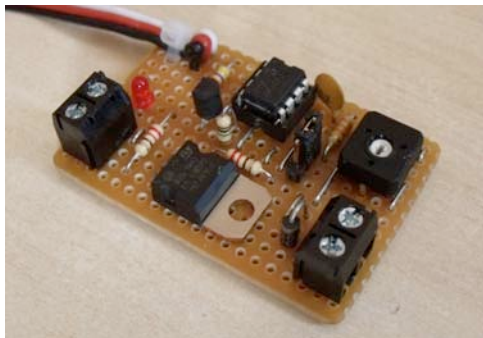
For boats with twin motors and propellers, two ESCs can be driven from a rudder mixer which, as its name suggests mixes equal and opposite proportions of the rudder signal with the throttle signal – so that when the boat is turning the outer motor speeds up and the inner motor slows down to assist steering. When stationary, progressively applying rudder drives one motor forwards and the other in reverse, which allows the boat to spin on its own axis.

### Enhanced Sound Unit



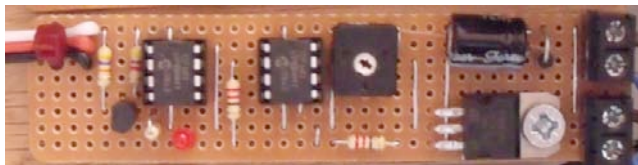
The sound unit is an enhanced version of the one originally published in the Autumn 2008 newsletter. The new unit features two extra radio control channel inputs with which the engine sound can be started and stopped at will (the channel 5 toggle switch on my transmitter) and the output volume can be adjusted from zero to embarrassingly loud! Also, a potentiometer permits user adjustment of the engine tick-over rate.

## R/C Switch Unit



Ken's tug also has an R/C switch used to turn navigation lights on/off, and another in Don Brazier's Tug is used to turn on the fire-hose water pump. This unit decodes a spare digital channel on the receiver and the transmitter toggle switch activates a 10A power FET switch. A more recent variant (shown here) allows the user, on a spare linear channel, to set the trip point anywhere within the stick range by adjusting a potentiometer and a programming link allows the switch operation to be momentary or latching.

## R/C dual tone Horn Unit



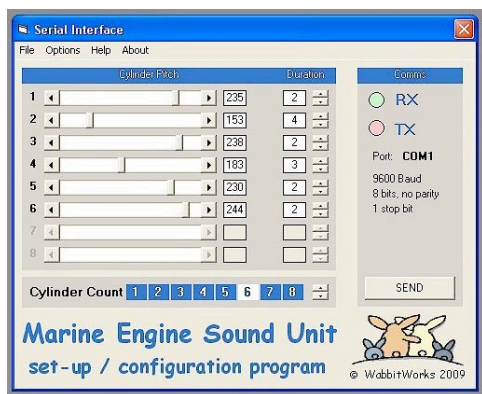
The horn unit decodes a spare receiver channel and user adjustable tones may be set for either side of stick centre – typically one of very low pitch and the other of medium to high pitch. The unit can either drive its own loudspeaker,

as in my Springer Tug, or a relay can be fitted to momentarily disconnect the engine sound speaker and switch the horn into it, as in Ken's tug.

## Future Developments

So, what will 2010 bring? Well right now I'm out of ideas as to what else the well dressed boat ought to wear, unless you guys come up with some more requirements.

A second generation sound unit offering more comprehensive user configuration of engine parameters is currently under development and will hopefully feature in a future newsletter. A sneak preview of work in progress has already been posted on YouTube on the SRCMBC channel (see end of this Newsletter). Neutral, stick/throttle gain, idle timeout, idling speed, top speed, engine type, number of cylinders (now up to eight) and volume can all be set by simple user adjustment controls – my thanks to Don Brazier for his feedback from repeatedly testing my various design iterations. In addition the new unit can support twin throttle installations. Remote engine stop/start and volume control (two extra channels required) may also be offered as an enhanced build standard.



Changing the character of sound assigned to each cylinder by editing the software listing and re-programming the PICAXE chips seems to have proved a bit forbidding to many users, so as an experiment I've also written a computer program with a simple graphical user interface which would allow users, via their computer's RS232 serial port, to adjust the pitch and duration of the individual sounds assigned to each cylinder by simply clicking and dragging sliders. This can be done whilst the engine is running, to immediately assess their effect. Configurations can be saved and loaded to/from the hard drive. In this way, more advanced users can create their own "designer sounds".

The very best sound systems play back recordings of actual sounds rather than trying to synthesize them. League Division One is my long term aim, but don't hold your breath!

I also have a scheme to introduce push button setting of throttle and rudder nulls on my rudder mixer. I also plan to make the mixing gain inversely proportional to speed to reduce the tendency for the boat to speed up in turns during normal running, yet maintaining full mixing authority at low speed for optimum manoeuvrability.

So there you have my review of 2009, and thoughts for 2010 - I look forward to electrifying even more of you this year!

*Alan Bond*



---

## Club Contact details

If your address, email, or other membership details change please make sure you contact:

**Lorna Soffe**, 1 Stoneleigh Avenue, Hordle, Lymington, Hampshire, SO41 0GS.

Email: [membership@srcmbc.co.uk](mailto:membership@srcmbc.co.uk) . Phone: 01425 615305

**N.B. If you can't attend the Highcliffe Show, send your subscription to Lorna before the end of April, 2010.**

For the newsletter: please send your "Ships I went to sea on" information, and hints and tips, adverts, orders for photo prints of your boats (in aid of the RNLI) or other contributions to:

**Peter Taylor**, 84 Priory Road, St Denys, Southampton, SO17 2HS

Email: [info@srcmbc.org.uk](mailto:info@srcmbc.org.uk) . Phone: 023 80554670 (you will get my answering machine; say who you are and I'll either answer if I'm there, or get back to you!)

For any other queries contact the Scale Section Captain:

**David McNair-Taylor**, 18 Wilton Gardens, New Milton., Hampshire, BH25 5UT

Email: [scalecaptain@srcmbc.org.uk](mailto:scalecaptain@srcmbc.org.uk) . Phone: 01425 618900

## Cut off date for entry in the next issue is : 31st March 2010

*But don't wait till then, send it to me now*, and especially give me more time if you are submitting on paper or want me to do the "art" work!

---

## Club Web Sites

Visit the Club Web Site at "<http://www.srcmbc.org.uk> "; At present we are getting 300 to 400 viewings per day with a large number coming from Russia! On Boxing Day we had 740 viewings!

We also have a movie channel on "YouTube"... "<http://www.youtube.com/user/srcmbc> ", this can be accessed from the standard Club Web Site through the "Photo Galleries and Movies" page.

If you don't have internet access at home you can always view our sites at your local library where the staff will be more than happy to show you how to go about it. You don't even need to know the web site address, just ask them to "Google srcmbc". At many libraries you can book a time slot so you are not queueing behind young computer games addicts!

---

## Photographic Prints (in aid of the RNLI)

Prints of any photos taken of your models can be ordered. For those of you who don't use the internet I'm willing to print (for free) one or more A4 sheets with small images of the photos of your boats so you can see what photos are available and choose any enlargements you might wish to have. So far this service has raised over £60 for the RNLI.

The prints are made using a photo quality inkjet printer on glossy Kodak inkjet paper. The price quoted below is for SRCMBC members collecting photos at the pond.

Custom print options include larger sizes (up to A2), printing on canvas, bags, cushions, coffee mugs etc. For these I would use the commercial service "Photobox"; contact me (Peter Taylor) for details.

Size	Price	Notes
6" x 4"	30p	Free to SRCMBC members who have supplied comments about their boats!
7" x 5"	80p	
10" x 8"	£1	Approximate size (within 1mm)
A4	£1	
Custom	Quote	Contact me, Peter Taylor (see above for contact details)