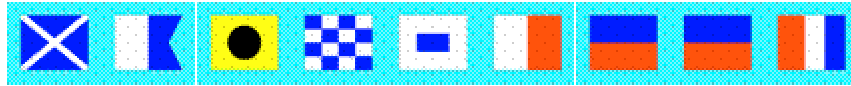

The Mainsheet



December 2005



End of an era?
See Metro Marine on page 2

Commander's Message

The boats are away and winterized for those long cold days ahead. I hope all had a safe and enjoyable boating season, albeit too short. This past boating season saw wonderful weather for both power boaters and sailors alike. But we also saw many tragedies on the water. There were several drowning and boat accidents that made the headlines. There

is also the single-handed sailor out for a late season day cruise who was not found for many days - and unfortunately was dead when found weeks later. These stories make us all think of how safely we conduct our own boating activities. Do we wear our PFD or safety harness? Do we rig jack lines? How do we prepare when foul weather is about to strike? How have we honed our coastal piloting skills? I personally do a lot of single-handing and I make

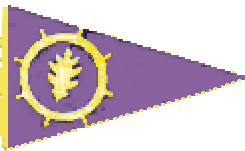
sure I always wear my PFD, which is an inflatable with a built-in safety harness. I have also rigged jack lines so I can clip on when up on deck. I am currently taking the Advanced Piloting course, and hope to take Celestial Navigation next fall. It is all the little things that make boating a fun and safe activity.

Beginning next year CPS will be helping out Transport Canada and the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary by providing the Pleasure Craft Courtesy Check (PCCC). A PCCC is a voluntary and free check of your boat to ensure you have the required minimum gear and your boat is in good general shape. If your boat passes, you get a decal that declares it passed. There will be a few Oakville Squadron members who will be trained and help out with the PCCC. More information will be provided in the coming months.

January brings us our winter training classes. Why not continue your boating education and encourage your friends and family to take the Boating Course, Boat Pro, Fundamentals of Weather, Global Weather, or VHF Radio Seminar? As the Christmas season is upon us why not purchase a gift certificate for your family or friends towards one of your Squadrons training courses?

Wishing you and yours a safe and happy holiday season. Hope to see you in class or on the water next year.

Respectfully,
Cdr. Peter Houzon, P



Metro Marine

The "End of an Era" reference on page one is not for the *Mir*, a 78ft ocean racer. Instead it is for Metro Marine. If you keep a boat anywhere in Oakville, but certainly in Bronte Harbour, you may know already that the Town of Oakville has not renewed Metro Marine's lease, but has opted to take over and run the marina. This completes a takeover which really started more than 30 years ago, when the Town drastically reduced the number of slips that Metro Marine controlled, and the storage space available to Metro Marine. This made the business a lot less viable, and in fact, the last time the Town called for tenders to take up the lease of the marina, only Metro Marine was interested.

To give the Town and the Oakville Harbours Development Authority its due, we may not have had so many slips available in Bronte Harbour, if the OHDA had not taken an interest. But who knows?

Metro Marine has a long history - not as long as the harbour itself, since there has been boat building and fishing out of Bronte for many years. In case you have forgotten, the 50th Anniversary issue of the Mainsheet referred to Philip Brimacombe's book on Bronte Harbour, which covers the history of the harbour from about 1800 to early 1900's. The late Harry Greb, owner of the Hush Puppies shoe company, bought the current buildings and started Metro Marine in 1945. There was still pleasure craft boat building done - some owners even shipped hulls from Europe for completion in Bronte. Original operations used a marine railway, which was located at the corner where the creek turns into the harbour entrance. For many years now, operations have been using a TravelLift and a boom crane for masts. Boat repairs are still going on in Bronte, lately with Northshore Boatworks operating on a lease in the large white building beside the creek, while G&B Sports Marine will look after your engine problems for you.

Information on the how exactly the OHDA will run the marina is somewhat hard to pin down at the time of writing. A new TravelLift and boom crane have been delivered, so the marina will still presumably run as a full service operation. Keep in mind though, that the OHDA is under the control of the Town Council, so who knows what could happen in the future? Rumour has it that one councillor would have preferred to just bring in a crane for spring and fall haulouts, as is done by OHDA in Oakville, and by the yacht clubs. The other rumour that you will see the TravelLift trundling along Lakeshore Road between Bronte and Oakville harbours is *probably* false.

It is to be hoped that Northshore Boatworks, G&B Sports Marine, and Dock 16 will continue in their present locations. The first two are the only repair facilities close to the water between Hamilton and Port Credit, and Dock 16 is now the only independently owned chandlery in Oakville. Apparently, Oakville Nautical Outfitters is closing. At least the OHDA is on the boaters' side. Oakville Power and Sail Squadron really appreciates that our flyers are mailed out to everyone with a mooring in the harbours with the mooring, launch and haulout information.

More information should be available by the next Mainsheet issue.



More on 'Mir'

The 78' ocean racer 'Mir' was bought by Harry Greb and sailed from Stockholm via Cowes, Falmouth and the Azores, to Toronto. The voyage was reported in the Telegram and a complete account was written for "Boating" magazine by George Cuthbertson and Peter Davidson. Perhaps you can find back issues! The series started in the Jan/Feb 1954 issue.

MIR was designed by Finnish naval architect Jarl Lindbloom, and building was mostly at the Abo Yachts yard in Finland. Her building was interrupted by war, so she was not finished until 1951, when she was sailed from Helsinki to Stockholm to have the interior finished and engine installed. The original owner did not keep her long, and she was sold to Harry Greb in 1953. She started the Stockholm - Toronto trip on June 14th, 1953.

MIR was not the Greb's first boat by any means. Before **MIR** there was the 51' **HERON** which was raced on Lake Ontario before 'two-foot-itis' hit and **MIR** was bought with the intention of taking part in the 1954 Freeman Cup. **MIR** is still alive and well on the west coast of the USA.

Information courtesy of Barbara Greb.

Winter Courses

The Commander's message reminds you about our winter courses starting January. Full details of times, costs and registration are available on our website at <http://oakville.cps-ecp.org>. Now is the time to encourage all your boating friends to take a course. Weather, PCOC and VHF courses are open to anyone, not just CPS members.

Great Lakes Water Levels

Water levels in the Lakes are like the weather - everyone complains about them, but no one can do anything. Well, not quite. CPS keeps a finger on the pulse of the International Joint Commission. The report of a meeting in Midland this year is reproduced below. There is a great deal of information in it which you may not be aware of, and it *is* important to be aware of the current USA/Canada agreements, given the fears being expressed over some US states wishes to divert water from the Great Lakes. Thanks to John Hinksman for passing on the report.

International Lake Superior Board of Control - Public Meeting July 12/05

A public Meeting was held in Midland, concurrently with one held in Sault Ste Marie, to provide information on the operations of the Board, current and forecasted water levels, and to receive public input about local concerns related to water levels and flows of Lakes Superior, Michigan and Huron (including Georgian Bay). The two sites were linked by conference phone for a portion of the meeting, and participants shared questions and concerns.

The Midland meeting was very well attended, -more than 100 people present. This appeared to pleasantly surprise the presenters, who were not prepared for such a large gathering. Extra chairs were hurriedly brought in though the absence of a sound system proved annoying. Presenters were continually asked to 'speak up' by people in the back of the hall. Only 18 members of the public attended at Sault Ste. Marie.

The Board representative was Carr McLeod, who facilitated the meeting. Others present were Gary Johnson from the US Corps of Engineers, and David Fay - Secretary of the Canadian Section of the Board. Also present was Mr. McCauley, a representative from the International Joint Commission in Ottawa. The Lake Superior Board forms part of the International Joint Commission (IJC) family of Boards.

Members of the public included local residents, members of the Georgian Bay Assn. (GBA) and members from the Ontario Boating Forum (OBF), as well as interested cottagers and the media.

The Meeting began with Mr. McLeod reviewing the history and operation of the IJC, explaining that it was the result of an agreement made in 1909 between the US and Canada, and that

its jurisdiction stretched the length of the entire Canadian/US border - the Yukon to the Gulf of Maine

In 1979 the water level in Lake Superior was set at 182.76M to 183.86M, or 599.6ft to 603.2ft. The Lake level is controlled at Sault Ste Marie, with one diversion to Chicago of 90 cu.m per second. If the gates are full open the level in lower lakes would only rise 4 cm. Allocations are made on a monthly basis of outflows from Lake Superior to accommodate fisheries, navigation and hydro power. The current plan #1977A has been in full use since 1990, which allows 2130 cu.m per second from Lake Superior to Lake Michigan and Lake Huron. Lake Huron and Lake Michigan may be below Chart Datum by the end of the year. The other control point for the Great Lakes is at Cornwall. There appeared to be misunderstanding about the Chicago diversion, some of the public feeling that this caused the US to get more water than Canada. This is not the case, according to Mr. McLeod, who stated that the Great Lakes are shared 50/50. He did state that this diversion was in place for many years, and that no other diversions would likely be allowed.

Several members of the public were critical of changes in the St. Clair River, which appeared to be the result of dredging. An article had appeared in the local Midland newspaper on the subject, which had aroused much concern. Mary Muter of the GBA reviewed the study which had been funded by their Foundation, which was the basis of this criticism. The experts present advised that the Study had not been definitive enough for their purposes, and although they would take it into consideration, more study was required. It was noted that an official IJC Plan of Study to review outflows and river changes was under way. The steps taken regarding this plan were announced and it was noted that a draft document was due by August 21/05, with a Public Meeting to discuss this being called for early September.

Comment was made on the Lake Ontario/St Lawrence River Study, which was being used somewhat as a guideline on procedures. In this study, environmental concerns were strongly noted, and the current IJC Plan of Study would give environmental issues a higher profile than in the past. David Fay explained, by way of a Power Point presentation, the basins of the Great Lakes and the various areas that must be taken into consideration in any Study. In fact what was needed to be studied took up considerable time, he said. Funding was an issue, and it was noted that Environment Canada provides funding as does the US Water Resources Commission. Funding was not yet in place for the Study.

An interesting comment was made from the Sault Ste. Marie group, noting that when recently the gates were opened there to increase outflow, the St Marys River experienced a huge problem in rapid rise of its level, and increase in the rapids. Anglers were very much affected by this. It appears that a

directive is given as to how many gates will be opened, and this is then done. Only one day's notice is given out that the gates will be opening. Members of the public felt this was far too little notice, and asked that this be reviewed. Much discussion took place on the logistics of opening the gates, i.e. all together or one at a time over a time period.

Another topic was the Meeting recently held by the Governors of the Great Lakes States. The IJC was noticeably absent and apparently not invited for the discussions. They will be making comment on the findings, as can the public via Metro Hall. Mary Muter also noted that the GBA website had information available.

Information was given by the Corps of Engineers, on a question regarding invasive species. It seems that an electrical barrier was constructed at Chicago to prevent the Asian carp from entering the Great Lakes system from the Mississippi. A 5 year study had been conducted as to its efficiency and it would likely be made into a permanent barrier in future. This did not affect navigation at all, it was noted.

The Meeting closed with a general question/answer session, with the main issue being 'will the Lakes get back to the water levels of some years ago?' This was a difficult question for the experts as so many things factor into it. It is by keeping itself informed that the public can try to influence the decision makers on the hugely important subject of the Great Lakes water levels.

Doreen Hinksman
7/12/05

More Great Lakes Information

The link below was passed on by a student in this year's Piloting course. We all know about Lake temperatures - but how about currents? You can find all sorts of information on the Lakes, some in animated form, by going to

<http://www.glerl.noaa.gov/res/glcfs>

It is a USA site, so don't look for the French version.

And now, a few follow up items.

Paul O'Hara sent us some photographs and articles on his trip through the Trent and Georgian Bay this year. "Whale Song" is now on blocks in Orillia. Paul may just be heading out to the west coast, taking the boat with him. Now, that would give us some great photographs.

Does anyone need a really good reason to take the Boating course? Kristy Black, who took the course last year can give you one. Following her South African trip, (see the August 2005 Mainsheet) she and Gary are now the crew on a 50' catamaran "Seahorse Seeker" in the BVI's. They are working for a charter company called Voyage Charters. Of course, it may not just be the Boating course. Kristy is also a gourmet cook, and both are PADI certified divers. To see her menus, go to <http://www.voyagecharters.com/index002.asp>. Follow the Crewed Charters/BVIs/Seahorse Seeker links.

Congratulations to Oakville's own P/R/C John Hinksman SN, who is now the Course Director for the Celestial Navigation course.

Boating Graduation

Graduation for the Fall 2005 Boating classes will be at Bronte Harbour Yacht Club on Friday January 27th, 7:30 pm - 10:00 pm. Cost is \$10 per person. You have a chance to congratulate the new graduates, have a drink of your choice, a few nibbles, and perhaps even meet some people from your own Boating class. To sign up for the event, call Hugh Ramsay at 905-827-3005, or e-mail hughrams@enoreo.on.ca

Submissions for the Mainsheet

If you have an article or photographs you would like to see in the Mainsheet, send them by e-mail them to the address given above for graduation, or if you do not have e-mail, call the number above for an address for snail mail.