

Derby Motor Boat Club - 1938 to 1939

1938

The Derby Motor Boat Club was formed in 1938 by a group of dedicated businessmen who spent a lot of time and money developing the Club.

J V Vamplew was elected as Commodore.

Extract from "Derby Motor Boat Club History Jun 1965", page 1:

"The first craft to moor at the Headquarters of the Derby Motor Boat Club in Sawley Cut, were owned by Mr. Vamplew, Mr. Dickens and Mr. Jones. The year was 1937 and in these days the lock keepers lot was quite a happy one as they retained a percentage of mooring fees and lock fees as their perquisite.

It is accepted that a certain amount of 'poaching' must have gone on, for the following year a further five gentlemen, realising the benefits of a safe and secure mooring under the aegis of the lock keeper of that day, Mr. Len Ebbins, found themselves in the secluded mooring at Sawley."

Extract from "Derby Motor Boat Club History Jun 1965", pages 2, 3 & 4:

"One of the early members of the Club, was the late Mr. Harry Jones who owned a boat called 'Dorande' and its log from 1938 has come to hand. It is wonderfully illustrated and describes in detail the various early cruises. Mr. Jones's father had been associated with boat building in Liverpool and 'Dorande' was built in Alfreton by Oram under his supervision. Another early associate of the Club was Mr. Perron who carried out the plumbing and panelling work on 'Dorande' and of course acted as crew on the early cruises. It is through the good will of Mrs. Perron that I am pleased to quote the following:-

Earliest craft on the moorings.

'Deva'	Owned by Mr. Butler.
'Dragonfly'	Owned by Mr. Dickens.
'Jinde'	Owned by Mr. Clark.
'Westwood'	Owned by Mr. W. Avery.
<i>This gentleman left the district for the South Coast when, World War 2 started, but returned later.</i>	
'Lady Gertrude'	Owned by Mr. Vamplew.
<i>This was the most luxurious boat on the mooring at that time.</i>	
'Dorande'	Owned by Mr. Jones.

Incidentally, I am advised that 'Dorande' was sold to a gentleman from Leicester called Worthington. Surely this must be our Mr. Worthington who has lent such terrific weight to the Club for many years.

For further interest I should like to quote from 'Dorande's Log Book the following :-

"The 1938 Cruise. We left Sawley at 11 a.m. with kindly weather in company with other members of The Derby Motor Boat Club as follows:-

'Westwood' (Mr. W. Avery)
'Dragonfly' (Mr. A. Dicken)
'Jinde' (Mr. E. Clark)
'Deva' (Mr. F. Butler)
(and 'Dorande')

Proceeding down stream through Cranfleet Lock, past Barton Island, Beeston Lock, we moored for lunch in the Beeston Canal. On to Castle Lock; here Dragonfly and Jinda's crews went ashore at Nottingham to buy supplies. Margaret Adams (now Perron) joined 'Dorande' which boat continued to Meadow Lock and moored in the River Trent to await the remainder of the fleet. All five boats met in Holme Lock and proceeded to a pleasant mooring at Gunthorpe. The crews (ex minors) duly visited the local Inn and waxed friendly. Sunday morning was bathed in sunshine, but none of the party bathed in the river. A shore party walked to the weir and the children paddled, ably assisted by Mrs. Clark and London Mory. It is said of the latter that "she aint ever seen a blide of gorse in her loife." After lunch the whole fleet continued down stream. 'Deva' managed to burn out a coil but her skipper - with his inherent wisdom - had a spare which he duly fitted after saying four hundred times to Mrs. Deva "not that one, the other one".

We continued to Averham which has a delightful mooring place. The sun shone and several bathed, including Mrs. Dicken in a costume Parisienne thereby causing boats to nearly run ashore instead of maintaining proper course.

Messrs. Dicken and Clark fished, why and what nobody understood. They say they caught some fish, but personally I never saw one. However if a poet is allowed a licence, why not a fisherman - shades of Isaac Walton - I would I were and artist.

Mrs. Butler took all the children in the party to the swings and roundabouts etc., at Farndon (per adua - aux étoiles). Next day the fleet continued down stream in continued sunny weather through Newark to Muskham and moored the boats outside the Newcastle Arms. The crews moored inside. 'Deva' retraced her course upstream - her holiday being only the August week end.

'Westwood' proceeded downstream as she wished to make Boston and return to Sawley in a week.

The following morning all the crews of 'Jinda', Dragonfly', and 'Dorande' all went to Newark aboard 'Dorande' for sundry shopping expeditions. On return to Muskham the fleet (now reduced to three) passed through Cromwell Lock - the last lock - onto the tidal part of the Trent. During this run of about three hours, all boats had divers troubles. 'Dragonfly' had engine trouble, 'Jinda' ran aground, and 'Dorande' broke her steering wires. Arriving at Torksey Lock there was considerable delay as the lock keeper was missing. On his return (from possibly his local Dorchester), we passed through onot the Fosdyke Canal and pushed along in the fading light. Darkness stopped further progress and we moored for the night at Drinksey Nook. The map showed the position of an inn here but the inn was not; it is now a petrol filling station instead of a beer filling station. We were off early next morning for Saxilby the urgency being milk for breakfast. Messrs. Clark, Dicken, and Jones visited the local barber for a shave. The beard of the said Jones being so long the barber thought it a shame to remove such a natural adornment.

On to Lincoln and several happy landings. We visited the Cathedral and the old prison, offices, shops, milk bars and sometimes other bars. During the evening whilst in the Saracens Head, Sinbad Clark made the alarming discovery he had lost a roll of £1 notes, about £5. Frantic searches and calls - finishing at the Police Station - caused the finding

of the said notes which had been found by 'an honest woman' who restored them to smiling Sinbad. The next morning 'Jinda' and 'Dragonfly' - who had three weeks holiday - entered the lock into the River Witham for Boston, 'Dorande' was now left alone at Lincoln and returning down the Fossdyke stayed the night at Saxilby.

Next day was the hottest of the whole holiday, the sun was burning. Derek and pere kept forming shore parties for ice creams without success. We bathed and did not dress; coolness only came with the setting sun and we moored for the night near Torksey. Next day we found we were not permitted to pass through the lock into the Trent, the day being Sunday. On Monday morning the engine reused to start. After sending a phone S.O.S. to a Lincoln garage we managed to get under way about 6 p.m. There was a strong current against us all the way upstream to Cromwell. We pushed on in the dark - when the engine decided to petter out about 300 yards from Cromwell Lock. We moored on two anchors - and lost one - this was later retrieved by the lock keeper. Mrs. 'Dorande' (galley slave No.1) spent a very restless night and smoked and smoked and made tea.

Next morning in day light we found a delightful mooring at Jobbins (?) yard - up a backwater very quiet and peaceful. The next morning Mr. and Mrs. Boosie joined us and we continued to Fiskerton and when ashore for supplies. On to Stoke Lock where we tied up to a barge and were towed at about 12 knots to Nottingham. We entered the Beeston Canal and returned to Sawley Lock, where we slept and returned home on the following Saturday morning.

So ended our first cruise on the waters of the River Trent."

Built by Oram in '38.
A sturdy ship I must here state,
Of mahogany, pine and seasoned oak,
The Bill was met - but nearly broke,
We installed the engine - a famous yank,
With the name of gray which is no crank,
The name 'Dorande' I must add,
Is half my wife and half my lad ----

The above cruise is printed with the kind permission of Mrs. M. Perron."

=====

1939

Extract from "Derby Motor Boat Club History Jun 1965", page 1:

"Come Easter 1939, when these gentlemen decided to form a club, to further the cause of boating, and under the first Commodore Mr. Vamplew, the Derby Motor Boat Club was born. By the end of the year some 30 members with craft could be mustered, but unfortunately stagnation developed owing to the outbreak of war in that year.

Never-the-less the club continued in existence and made its contribution to the war effort, by the formation of a River Patrol under the command of Mr. Vamplew, who had his headquarters in the lock house at Sawley, with the aforementioned Len Ebbins acting as his batman, wit no doubt the everwilling help of Mrs. Ebbins. Incidentally our mooring Officer Bill Attenborough, was a member of the next patrol downstream, with a peculiar rank of Sergeant. Perhaps being a band of land and water bobs, the ranks of the Royal Marines were considered appropriate.

Little pleasure boating went on during the early war years, and for quite a few years afterwards, as no doubt the 'export only' tag was important to the National Economy, as was the effect of depleted bank balances with the rest of us."

=====

G Warsop memories : J.V. Vamplew had a wooden day-cruiser broad beam boat with no bedding so he used it as a day boat. One day apparently he went over the weir with his boat.