



# THE FOGHORN

*Newsletter of the Marine Modelers Club  
of New England*

**2023-- Our 33rd Year!!**

**August 2023**

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Note: Use [officers@marinemodelers.org](mailto:officers@marinemodelers.org) to reach all the club officers as a group.

## Upcoming Events

**Saturday, August 26, 11am 3 pm:** Fun Float and Pot Luck picnic at Memorial Park Beach in Sharon. Frank Cook is coordinating the food arrangements. He reports that we have 23 members and guests coming! It should be a great time!

**Saturday, September 9, 11am – 2pm:** Fun Float and steering competition at Memorial Park Beach in Sharon.

**Wednesday, September 20, 10am – 4pm:** Joint Fun Float with the Down East Ship Modelers Club in Scarborough, Maine.

### **More about the Steering Course:**

Typically there is a laid out course that includes maneuvering your vessel in confined spaces, around buoys in the proper direction and sequence, docking going forward and reverse, and staying in the channel without hitting the channel markers or another vessels. It is a timed course, and each vessel is released in 5 minute intervals. There is usually 3 or 4 vessel classes based on the length of the vessel. Longer vessels usually can't compete in restricted maneuvering as compared to smaller vessels. There is an assigned point addition given to twin screw vessels and those with bow thrusters for their increased maneuverability. At the end of each vessels run, the judge will record the elapsed time and points scored for errors. The winner of each class will have the lowest elapsed time and the fewest error points. The fewest error points always trumps the shortest elapsed course time. The winner for each class will have bragging rights!

## **A Radio Controlled Rowboat** **by** **Bruce Murray**

The rowboat uses two pairs of servos to control the motion of the oars. One pair actuates the fore and aft action and the other provides the raising and lowering of the oar blades. The servos are connected to a micro-controller that receives signals from the R/C receiver. The system completely duplicates all the actions of a rower. The microcontroller was supplied by its designer in the UK, contact details below.



The boat hull is 12” long, made from a Bevin’s Skiff Scale Model kit from Chesapeake Light Craft. The sheers were raised by about 1/4” to provide enough depth for the servos to sit appropriately.

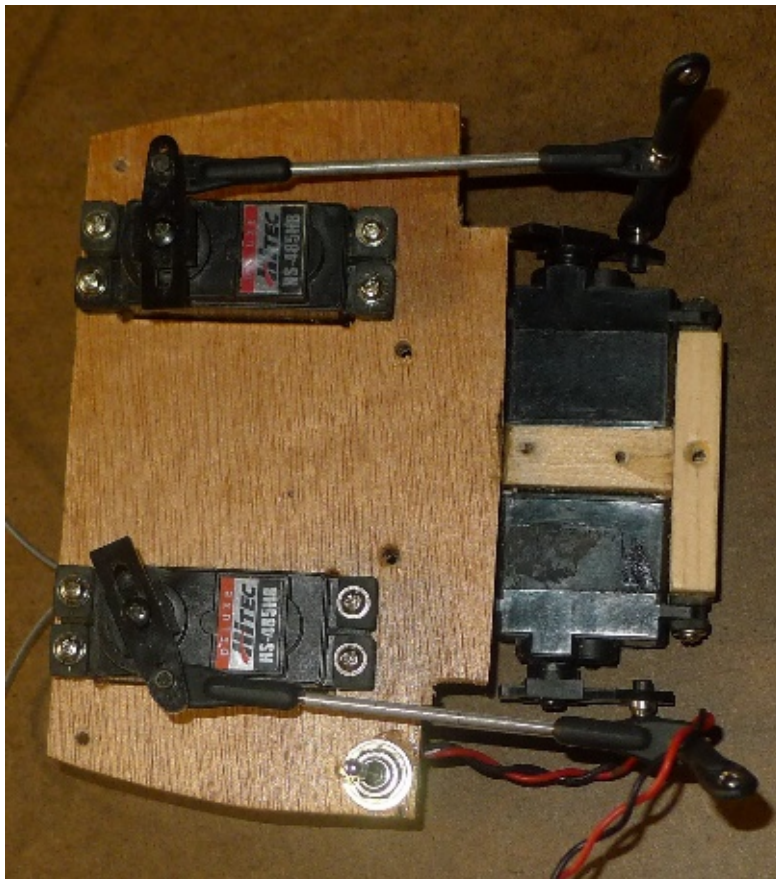
The oars were made from 5/16 oak dowel and the blades with their curved ends were made with two layers of 0.01” ply held and glued in a curved clamp. The oar locks were custom made from brass.

The oarsman is an action doll of Richie Cunningham and so the boat is named Happy Days.

## The Mechanism

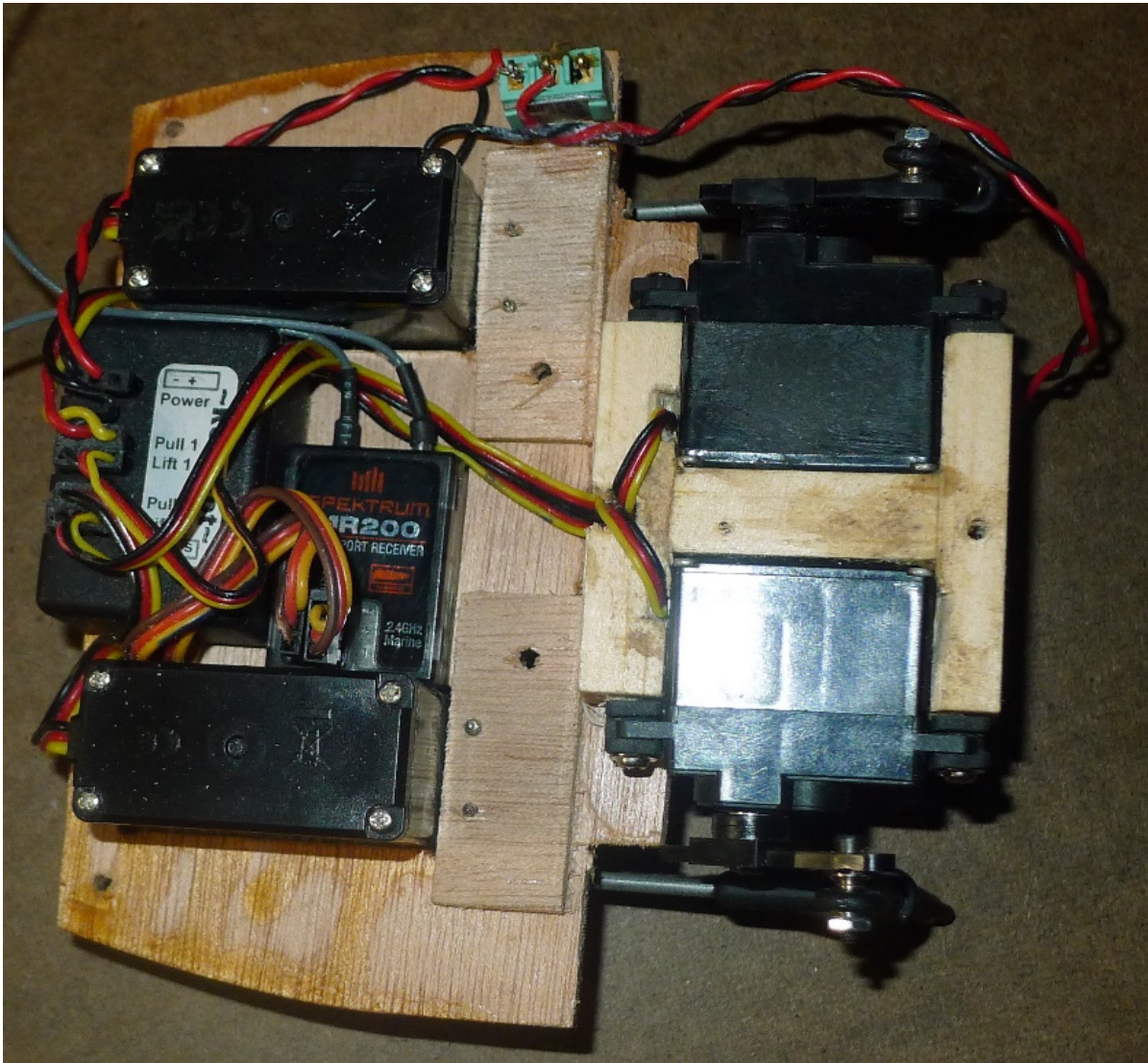


A central platform provides the mounting of the servos, the receiver, and the microcontroller. Dubro #2-56 ball joints are used at each of the linkage points and also on the wrists of the action doll.



In the view to the right, two pull servos on the left are standard size HS-485BB's. On the right are the two lift servos, the more compact HS82MG .





In the above view, between the pull servos sits the microcontroller and the Spektrum MR200 receiver. Given the need to make the installation compact all the leads were trimmed to the shortest possible.

## Power Supply

The batteries are situated at the stern under a cover. The power switch is on the servo platform.



## The receiver

Initially I tried to use a Spectrum AR420 receiver but this was not successful and the servos gave random motions. After some discussions with the microcontroller designer the reason for this was found to be that the receiver output pulses must not occur simultaneously on all channels since this confuses the controller. Older receivers such as the MR200 put out their pulses staggered in time and these work fine with the controller.

Apparently, the controller was designed some years ago before the advent of modern receivers.

## Operation

A video is posted on google drive that shows the boat being bench tested. From this you can get an idea of the linkage action.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1QMj9PBDLPKnF1EeHQkBN6h3nnYgxokB7/view?usp=sharing>

Also there is a video of it in the water

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VZ8u1BYRu06SmOqQLHSIcwLunckwxRCc/view?usp=sharing>

The image here is not too sharp due to use of a low data rate micro card. I will try again with a higher rate card.

## Parts and Supplies I Used

Bevin's Hull Kit	Chesapeake Light Craft	clcboats.com
Micro Controller	Alan Senior	<a href="mailto:anola.alan@virginmedia.com">anola.alan@virginmedia.com</a>
Pull servos	HS-485 HB	HITEC
Lift Servos	HS-82MG	HITEC
Receiver	MR200	Spektrum
Ball Joints	#2-56	DUBRO

**Notes:-** Alan Senior has a set of instructions that describe the set up details.  
In 2016 there is a comprehensive thread on the Rowbot here:

<https://www.rcgroups.com/forums/showthread.php?2647688-Radio-controlled-pond-skiff-rowboat>

### **Club Clothing is now available!**

Our club store on CafePress has been updated. We have created an MMC Storefront, uploaded our our logo, and listed a variety of items available for purchase. You may visit the site here:

**<https://www.cafepress.com/mmcne>**

How the process works: CafePress is a print-on-demand service. The items are printed and shipped by CafePress directly to the buyer when ordered. There are no minimum order requirements, and then club did not need to pay anything ahead of time.



Anyone can set up a dedicated storefront and sell items to the general public. Sellers are allowed to set whatever markup they'd like. We have priced our items at \$1 over actual cost— the profits will be used to help offset our annual web page costs.

**LOW STOCK ALERT:** CafePress is still having some supply chain issues this year. As a result, the items offered may go in an out of stock over the next several months. (If an item you'd like to buy is OOS, you can sign up for an email notification when it becomes available.

The CafePress site can give you the impression that everything is in stock until you put it in the shopping cart.

Once you look at the shopping cart, it will give you the final verdict as to whether or not the specific item/size/color it is in stock.



## **Let's build a Harbor!**

If you are interested in helping to create a portable harbor as seen in the photos, please meet up with Jerry Trahan at the Aug 26 club picnic! In Jerry's words:

"The thing we as a group could make is a section of a harbor setup of a size easy enough to transport to where an event is. It could add a lot to the attention of our activities. Anyone who wishes to participate in this activity should see me at the lake next Saturday. Basically determining maximum size to make transport easy."

Here is some inspiration, courtesy of Tim Logan:



Editor's comment: This is a terrific idea! I won't be there, but I'm thinking we may want to settle on a couple of scales – one for smaller scale models (say 1/96) and something for larger scales. I think it would also be a good idea if we can settle on some sort of standard on how we can interconnect the different modules...

If you are interested, be sure to look Jerry up at the picnic!

## For Sale

Dumas U.S. Coast Guard 44' Lifeboat kit. Kit is complete and unstarted. It also includes an extra "Running Gear" package from James Bliss & Co. That set includes shafts, stuffing tubes, brass rudders, etc. This is clearly an older kit, as Bliss has been out of business for decades. The wood looks to be untouched, and of good quality. I picked it up about 3-4 years ago, and now I realize I'll never get around to building it. New kits are about \$200, and don't include the running gear-- I'll let this one go for \$130. - Bill Michaels



## Are you on Facebook?

If you are, you should definitely be following our club FB page. Tim Logan and Frank Cook have really stepped up our presence, and we have gained a lot of followers and "buzz" about our club events as a result.



**2023 Club Events Schedule**  
**(rev 2/10/23)**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Event/Theme</b>	<b>Location</b>
Sunday, 19 March	1pm - 4pm	Indoor Meeting Cameo4 Cutting Machine Demo	UCC Church Hall Medfield, MA
Saturday, 29 April	10am - 2pm	Icebreaker Fun Float	Memorial Park Beach, Sharon, MA
Saturday, 20 May	10am - 2pm	Fun Float/ Sailboats	Memorial Park Beach, Sharon, MA
Saturday, 3 June	9am - 5pm	Piscataqua RiverFest	Portsmouth, NH
Sunday, 11 June	10am - 2pm	Fun Float at Tuscan Village (LL Bean pond)	Salem, NH
Sunday, 9 July	1pm - 4pm	Fun Float/ Warships	Redds Pond, Marblehead, MA
Saturday, 26 August	11 am - 3pm	Fun Float/Club picnic/ Tugs and other Workboats	Memorial Park Beach Sharon, MA
Saturday, 9 Sept	11 am - 2pm	Fun Float and Steering Competition	Memorial Park Beach Sharon, MA
Wednesday, 20 Sept	10am - 4pm	Joint Fun Float with Maine Club (rain date 21 Sept)	Scarborough, ME
Sunday, 1 Oct	10am – 3:30pm	“Sharon Day” Exhibition	Memorial Park Beach, Sharon, MA
Saturday, 21 October	4pm - 7pm	Day/Night run	Memorial Park Beach, Sharon, MA
Sunday, 12 Nov.	12pm - 3pm	Indoor Meeting	UCC Church Hall, Medfield, MA
Sunday, 3 Dec.	12pm - 4pm	Holiday Dinner @ Prezzo Grille	Milford, MA

Note: Check the club website for address info/maps and any changes to the schedule. Most (but not all) Saturday events have a rain date of Sunday.