



Mayday at the mouth of the Fraser River

June 30 1530. While being on a July 1st long weekend safety patrol the Delta L/B received a Mayday call via channel 16. A 24 ft motor vessel hit a dead head and was taking on water. It was reported to be at the mouth of the Fraser river. The Delta was just on its way to Sand Heads and advised the CGD that our eta would be 1545. Crewmembers prepared the salvage pump and the lookouts tried to spot the vessel in distress. At 1545 the Delta received a call from the CGD that the vessel was not at mouth for the Fraser river but instead at the mouth of the North Arm of the Fraser river. The vessel Laredo Sound was on scene and took the vessel in tow to Mosquito Creek. The Delta was stood down by the CGD and proceeded with their safety patrol. No further incidents were encountered.



July 1 Canada Day Steveston fireworks

At 1900 the Delta L/B departed Ladner for Steveston with 11 crewmembers and 5 guests to perform a safety patrol and enjoy the fireworks. A detour was made to give the guests a chance to see the Reaches and Fraser river from a different perspective. The RHIB was launched to demonstrate RHIB handling and sticking to the Delta.

Monika brought a homemade rhubarb cake, Len's wife brought brownies and Ron brought ice cream to celebrate Canada Day. At approximately 2045 the Delta anchored outside Steveston harbour and the crew and guests relaxed and socialized waiting for the fireworks to start. The RCMP and RCM-SAR were patrolling the inner harbour but this time there weren't many boats on the water

compared to previous times. At 2215 the fireworks started and the crew and guests enjoyed it very much. No incidents were encountered and after the fireworks the Delta retrieved the anchor and headed back to Ladner Harbour where we secured at approximately 2315.



'The whole place is just silted up': Commercial fishing boats having tough time navigating through Steveston Harbour

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The Steveston Harbour Authority says the channel of water in the south Fraser River requires immediate dredging and is calling on the federal government for funding support. Over the last 24 hours, two more boats became stuck in Steveston Harbour as a result of increased sediment and low tide.





The general manager of the non-profit Steveston Harbour Authority, which manages the federally-owned harbour, says the issue is only getting worse and continues to negatively impact the local fishing industry. "It's extremely frustrating," said Jaime Gusto. "I mean, the harbour will be at a standstill if we don't get funding. Boats won't be able to unload their catch – they won't be able to access the 45 businesses here."

So far, the City of Richmond, the provincial government and the Steveston Harbour Authority have committed more than \$2 million each to help fund dredging the harbour. Fisheries and Oceans Canada – the federal department that owns the harbour -- has yet to commit any funding.

CTV News reached out to Fisheries and Oceans Canada Wednesday for comment but did not receive a response by deadline.

Gusto says the problem isn't new and doesn't understand what's taking so long for the federal government to step up. "It's just naturally occurring. Public works was dredging this channel since 1901," said Gusto, adding that she noticed the issue worsened after the atmospheric river in 2021. "This is the worst I've ever seen it and we need something done," said Albert Melnychuk, a commercial fisherman who's captained boats in the Steveston Harbour since 1979. "If I come in with a load of fish, I draw 12 feet and you still need water under the boat so I would be rubbing bottom which is very dangerous."

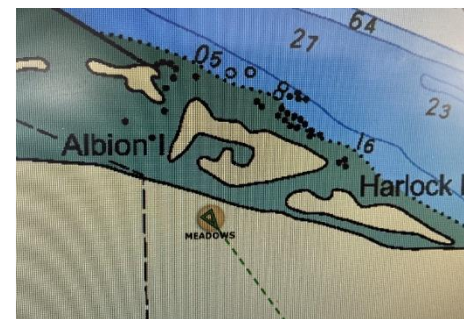
CTV News toured the harbour by boat Wednesday, approximately three hours before low tide, and observed some areas in the harbour had recorded a depth of fewer than five feet. Melnychuk says any large fishing boat is at risk of getting stuck if the water dips to around 10 feet. John Legate, one boat's captain say he was stuck for approximately three hours in the harbour on Tuesday.

"The whole place is just silted up and it's only getting worse," he said. "Frustration is probably putting it mildly."

It's not just large fishing boats having issues. At approximately 2:30 PM Wednesday during low tide, a sailboat was stuck in the harbour near fisherman's wharf. Beyond the economic impact of the commercial fishing industry, Melnychuk believes the area is at great risk of an environmental disaster.

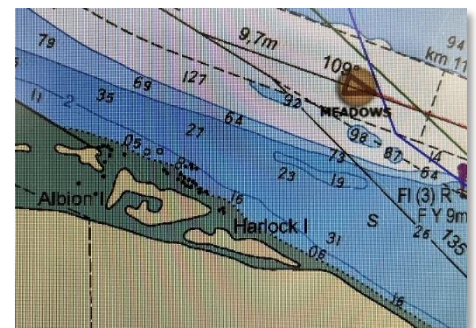
"If a boat got stuck and laid on her side, it would be devastating to the harbour because the fuel would be running out," said Melnychuk.

Gusto adds that even if the federal government were to provide its support soon, it could take around a year of paperwork, including permits and environmental assessments, before any dredging project would begin.



AIS location

Thursday evening July 6. While being out on the Delta L/B for a training exercise, crewmembers notice a vessel with AIS (Meadows) going 12 knots towards the shore. While following the vessel it kept on moving over land and suddenly it was back in the river as can be seen on these two screen shots. The AIS used by this pleasure craft is type B (like the Fraser L/B) and not type A (like the Delta L/B). To understand why this can happen a deeper



look into the differences between these types is necessary.

AIS information from a class A transponder (12.5 Watt) will always be prioritized and, thus, be shown to other ships in the area, whereas AIS information from a class B transponder (2 Watt) will not be shown until or if there is room on the AIS channel. An algorithm ensures that the AIS transmitter of a ship first notices how other ships transmit their messages and, subsequently, adjusts its own transmission pattern to that of the others. In case there are more ships fitted with AIS of class A in an area than the capacity of the bandwidth, the system will automatically limit the area of coverage so that the remotest ships in the area are discarded.

AIS of class B Small vessels fitted with AIS, such as recreational craft, can use a less expensive AIS station of class B, which transmits less frequently. A class B station will listen for a couple of milliseconds to hear whether a large ship is transmitting before it transmits its own message.

AIS transponders use VHF channels and GPS for communication and positioning. As mentioned in previous newsletters a GPS location is not always accurate.

Because of all of the above, a vessel with a class B transponder is not always exactly at the location it is showing on the chart plotter and therefore has to be confirmed by radar or by visual observation.



Safety concerns over silting-up of Delta river channel

From Delta Optimist website July 10, 2023. A town hall meeting on the dredging issue will be held this Wednesday in Ladner.

The CLI is part of Team Search and Rescue and is fully recognized by the Canadian Coast Guard. It provides secondary marine search and rescue capabilities in the coastal waters around Richmond, Delta, Surrey, New Westminster, the Fraser River, Strait of Georgia, Vancouver, Victoria, and elsewhere including Washington State. Delta Optimist file

It's become a situation that needs to be resolved immediately.

In a recent letter to Delta council, the Canadian Lifeboat Institution (CLI), which operates the Delta Lifeboat Station, expressed "deep concern over the desperate need for dredging in Ladner Harbour." John Horton, OIC for the Delta Lifeboat Station headquartered on McNeeley's Way, noted silting has reached a point where the "Delta Lifeboat", along with commercial and native fishing vessels, are severely restricted in being able to exit the harbour. "It was so bad over the Canada Day weekend that CLI was forced to anchor the lifeboat in Ladner Reach and ferry crew members out to conduct safety patrols in the Fraser River. If we had to land an injured person for transportation to hospital during low tide we would have had a serious challenge," wrote Horton. Adding dredging had been promised several years ago, he said it is imperative that work proceeds immediately.

A Delta staff response noted that the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority last September advised that proposed dredging of Ladner Harbour would be delayed until sometime in 2023, pending provincial approvals. "VanPile has been contacted to undertake the work and an application was submitted to the Province in April 2022. There are significant permit processing delays – staff will seek an update from the Ministry and will advise the letter-writer accordingly," the memo noted. The lack of a dredging program the secondary river channels has been an ongoing and growing concern for the City of Delta and others, including float homeowners and businesses.

A town hall meeting for stakeholders and the public, organized by MLA Ian Paton in conjunction with MP Carla Qualtrough and Mayor George Harvie, will be held this Wednesday, July 12 at the Fishermen's Hall in Ladner (4481 Savoy St.), from 7 to 8:30 p.m. For more information call 604-940-7930.

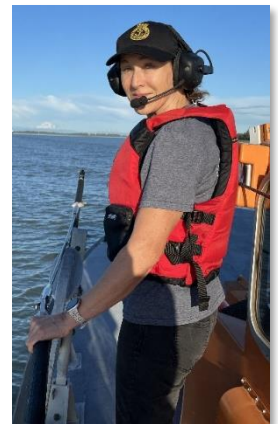
Wednesday July 12

John Horton, Brian Cook and Ron van der Zwan attended the town hall meeting at the Fishermen's Hall in Ladner as mentioned in the above article. Local residents, waterfront businessmen, fishermen, float home and pleasure craft owners attended the meeting. A lot of information was shared followed by heated statements and questions. The hope is that the funding granted to Richmond to dredge the Steveston harbour can be used as leverage to get funding for the Delta silting situation.



Cindy Cooper

I grew up in Winnipeg, so the water bug did not hit me until later in life. I have tried most modes of transportation on the water, even dragon boating. I've sailed in BC, Ontario, USA, BVIs and South Pacific and attended navigation, safety and diesel engine courses. It wasn't until I was fortunate enough to crew for some repositioning trips on a fishboat that I got the idea that motoring was a way to consistently get out on the waters locally. Thanks to the Boat Show and my interest in volunteering, I found the perfect place at CLI to do that. Are you supposed to say, "That was so much fun!" every time you come off a shift on a Canadian Lifeboat? I do.



'Disaster waiting to happen': Steveston Harbour manager

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"We need to do something before someone gets hurt or there's a natural disaster."

Jaime Gusto was in no mood to play down the severity of a second vessel in two days getting stuck in the mud at low tide in the harbour she manages.

Gusto told the *Richmond News* last week that "time is of the essence here," after being asked about the state of the dredging in Steveston Harbour.

She said that if the issue doesn't get resolved soon, a boat's hull could strike the seabed and rupture the fuel tank, bleeding fuel out into the water.

Last Tuesday, the *News* reported online how a fishing vessel, the Queen's Reach, got stuck at low tide in the middle of the harbour, sparking Gusto to call upon the federal government to cough up its \$2 million share for a dredging program.

But it happened again a day later. This time it was a smaller sailboat getting stuck.

Richmond News reader Drew Rickard spotted the stranded boat at around 2:30 p.m. last Wednesday, just one hour after low tide.

A photo of the vessel shows it was grounded not far from Fisherman's Wharf at the harbour.

"This is exactly what I was warning people about," said Gusto.



The Queen's Reach was stuck in the Steveston Channel for several hours until the tide came back in.

Jaime Gusto photo

According to Gusto, the lack of funding for dredging has resulted in the channel being not deep enough for boats to pass through.

Although the provincial government, the City of Richmond and Steveston Harbour Authority have each contributed \$2 million to support dredging in Steveston, the federal government has yet to contribute a single dime.

Gusto, who has been lobbying for federal funding for two years, told the *News* the situation is "so frustrating," and described it as an economic, safety and environmental issue.

This is the first time two boats have gotten stuck in the channel within a day, Gusto confirmed, "because it's as bad as it's ever been."

In terms of future "disasters," the largest boat in Steveston Harbour, said Gusto, has 128,000 litres of fuel.

She added that if small boats, such as the sailboat, are already struggling to get into the harbour, the situation is even more dire for larger boats.

Gusto recently met with representatives of the federal government, including Steveston-Richmond East MP Parm Bains, about the issue.

"I tell them every time we meet," she said, adding that the representatives confirmed they were aware of it and were trying to find a solution.

Steveston-Richmond East MP Parm Bains told the *News* he has been advocating for federal dredging assistance since being elected.

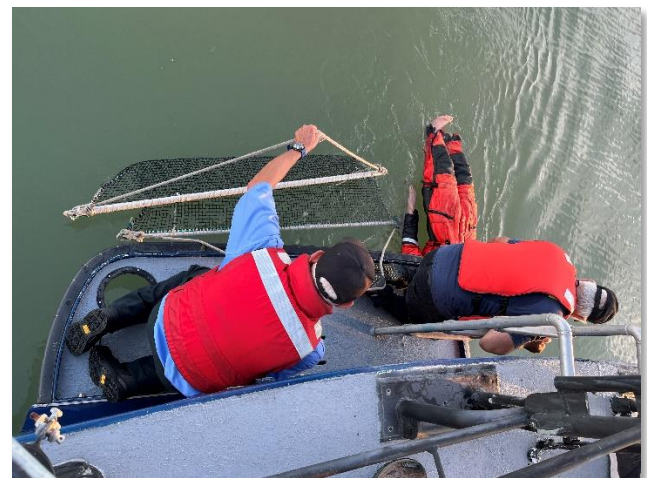
"While I share the frustration that the federal government has yet to come forward with a commitment, I am optimistic that a suitable solution will be found. I continue to work closely with appropriate ministries to find a solution for the immediate and long-term need that works for all stakeholders," he said.

Delta on the water training

Thursday July 13. Towing a vessel to safe harbour is one thing, but getting a vessel in its slip is another. This evening Delta crewmembers are practicing a simulated broken-down vessel (Delta) which has to be towed and pushed back into its slip by using the RHIB. First turning the Delta around 180° is practiced by pushing against the bow and stern. Crewmembers were surprised to find out that the Delta responds quicker when pushing the stern compared to the bow. After a few turns the RHIB takes the Delta in tow. Crewmembers practice going straight and then making a 90° turn "into the slip". This is done by using the tow-post on the bow of the RHIB and going into reverse. All crewmembers have a chance to do this maneuver. It is explained that different circumstances, like current, rain, wind, waves, will dictate the way a broken vessel is handled by the crew and what works today might not work tomorrow and an alternative way needs to be found.



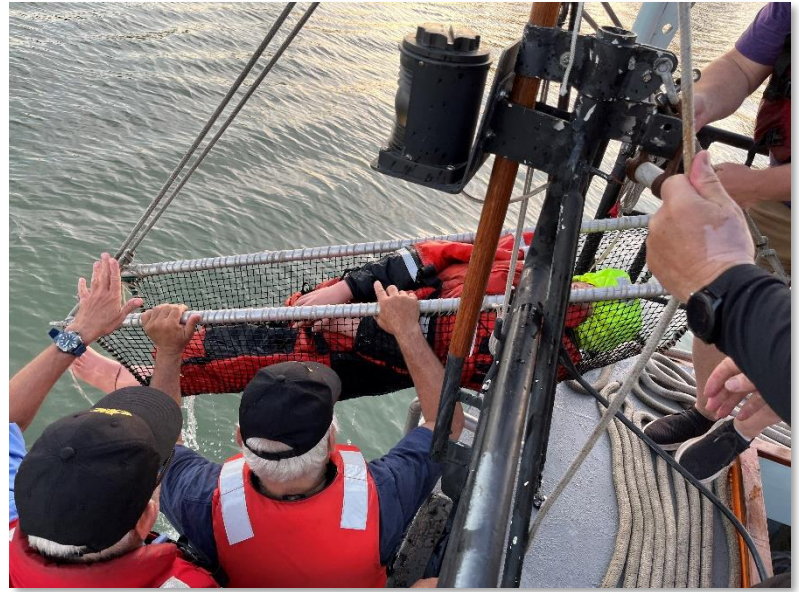
The RHIB is normally with the Delta but there will be a time that it is not available and the crew has to retrieve a MOB without it. A new idea is tested by using the swim grid, rescue stretcher net and davit to bring the MOB back on board of the Delta. A crewmember walks the MOB back to the stern of the Delta using a boathook. On the swim grid two crewmembers prepare the rescue stretcher net by securing the outer rope to the davit block



and tackle. The current will then push the net away from the Delta and the MOB can be floated into the net and hoisted on the Delta. After 3 revolutions the crew gets the

MOB back on board in a reasonable time but more practice will be needed. A SOP is in the making to share this technique with all the other crewmembers.

This training evening also showed the crewmembers that more RHIB training is needed, especially at low speeds and maneuvering in close quarters. Ladner harbour, with all the boat slips, is a great location where this training can take place.



July 20, 2023 The Delta Optimist A3

Residents express frustrations at dredging town hall

SANDOR GYARMATI
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More than 150 frustrated float homeowners and business owners made their anger known at a town hall meeting on the ongoing dredging issue at Fisherman's Hall in Ladner July 12.

The message most of the speakers conveyed was made loud and clear...they don't want to hear their political representatives describing how much they have been advocating...they want results.

Delta South MLA Ian Paton, Mayor George Harvie and MP Carla Qualtrough began the forum with presentations on their efforts and continued frustration getting someone to assume responsibility for immediate dredging to alleviate the rapidly silting-up secondary channels of the Fraser River.

All three said the port authority has been responsible before turn-

ing its back on what should still be its obligation.

Acknowledging the efforts of the Ladner Sediment Group, Qualtrough said the issue has been "the biggest jurisdictional passing of the buck" she's ever experienced since she was elected, suggesting residents form a new advocacy group.

The recent funding announcement for dredging in Steveston should provide leverage for Ladner, she said, adding there is currently a "massive jurisdictional gap" on the issue.

Paton, who recently submitted a petition in the Legislature, lamented it's a problem that hasn't been resolved for many years.

He said it's not worth "chasing down" \$12-to-\$14 million every 10 years to get dredging done at one time, only to see the problem come back. Instead, an ongoing maintenance pro-



SANDOR GYARMATI PHOTO

The Ladner Sediment Group's Mike Owen speaks at a town hall meeting on July 12.

gram costing \$2 million a year makes sense.

The province has a role to play, since it controls water lot leases, but the government refuses to even acknowledge there is an issue, he complained.

Harvie, who joined

forces with the City of Richmond, Tsawwassen First Nation and Musqueam Indian in the hope of having a stronger voice, described his efforts including meetings with federal officials in Ottawa, adding he's never been so frustrated

with the endless excuses. "My solution, the only solution, is to get the fricken port to do what they did before and look after the secondary channels... They can do the permits, but we've had no good relationships with the port, even

since I was city manager and the last little bit as the mayor," Harvie said.

Harvie, who is also chair of Metro Vancouver, also said he will be pushing for a meeting along with Metro's representative at the port's board.



A16 The Delta Optimist July 20, 2023

Firefighters' Charitable Society donates AED to Delta Lifeboat

The Canadian Lifeboat Institution (CLI), a search and rescue team fully recognized by the Canadian Coast Guard, offers assistance to mariners in distress in the Fraser River, Gulf of Georgia and adjacent waters, which include the coastal waters around Delta and Richmond.

Over the years, while on waterway assignments or patrol, the CLI has provided medical assistance to people for heart attacks, strokes, head injuries, limb amputations and hypothermia.

The mission of the CLI is "Saving Lives at Sea."

Due to the pandemic, CLI crews, which are all volunteers, were unable to update their first aid training.

"Delta Lifeboat is an important part of the City of Delta's Emergency



Pictured left to right; Brian Cook, CLI board member; David Ayton, Deputy Chief, Delta Fire Department; Kristy Storey, Delta Firefighter & Charitable Society Secretary; John Horton, Officer in Charge, Delta Lifeboat.

Services Program," said Delta's Emergency Program Deputy Chief, Dave Ayton. "In May, Delta Lifeboat volunteers attended a first aid training session

held at Boundary Bay Firehall No. 4 which was instructed by two Delta Firefighters. All participants trained in emergency first aid, CPR, operating an AED, and are now re-certified."

In support of the important work Delta Lifeboat offers the community, the Delta Firefighters' Charitable Society was proud to donate a new AED to be carried on the Delta Lifeboat, adding to the

compliment of life-saving tools.

"We were so appreciative to have received this training provided by Delta Fire and have our people re-certified while learning some new first aid skills," said John Horton, Officer in charge of Delta Lifeboat.

Horton, a previous member of the British Royal Navy, has been volunteering for CLI since 1988.

RHIB cradle by John Horton

The CLI Delta station extends its grateful thanks to P.J. McLellan who constructed a wonderful wooden cradle for the stations RHIB.

The cradle enables the RHIB to be unloaded for cleaning and servicing the engine.

Also tanks you to John Ashikian who gave the cradle three coats of paint. Great Job 'BZ'.



FCRCC Race around Bowen

The False Creek Racing Canoe Club organized again this year a race circumnavigating scenic Bowen Island in Howe Sound. The CLI was requested to provide a safety vessel for this event. On



Friday July 28th the Delta L/B departed at 1800 for transit to Snug Cove. The sea was calm and after an uneventful transit the Delta anchored 2140 at Mannion Bay.

The following day "Call the Hands" (get out of bed) was at 0630 in order for the crew to light the stove and get the hearty breakfast ready and devoured before RCM SAR 14 was expected to come alongside. At 0805 Bill and his SAR team came alongside to discuss the event. It was a pleasant surprise to see former CLI crewmember Gary Wegener, who moved to Gibsons and joined RCM SAR 14 2 years ago. Brian and Adrian left with RCM SAR 14 to attend the race committee meeting at Crippen Park Snug Cove to discuss the event and the safety role Delta and the RHIB were going to play during today's paddling event.



At 0920 RSM SAR 14 returned with an extra crewmember Monika, who took the ferry to Bowen Island to join us for the day and return trip to Ladner. The paddlers would circumnavigate 32 km around Bowen Island clockwise and the Delta was assigned the position at the head of the race. The RHIB was launched to escort the first paddler from the starting line. This



paddler was doing the whole race prone on his paddleboard using his hands to propel him forward.



Halfway through the race a kayaker flipped over and the Delta was there to help. The kayaker indicated that he was OK by using the tap on the head, which is also used by divers when they are at the surface. By using a bailing pump, he was able to empty the kayak, climb back in and continue the race. He informed the crewmembers this was the first time this happened to him in 30 years of racing.



Around 1500 the race came to an end and the Delta was released from its task. RCM SAR14 came alongside to pick up Adrian who was going back with the ferry to Horseshoe Bay. The Delta departed Mannion Bay but while on the way had to return because a fender was lost and needed to be retrieved (successfully). The transit back to Ladner was again uneventful and the Delta secured at 1841 at the lifeboat station.

During this deployment crewmembers had a chance to rotate through all positions (helm, nav, lookout), using the 0.5-hour watch system, thus improving their skills. RHIB handling was practiced throughout the day by all. Again, a great deployment where the crew learned a lot while enjoying and watching an amazing race.

Upcoming events!

Please sign up through our website as early as possible for these great events. The CLI can't participate without your support!

Friday September 1 – Sunday September 3

