



# MARITIMER

## LMS Moorage Agreement

*Protection for the marine asset.*

Changes to the LMS moorage agreement, which will protect the assets of the Ladysmith Maritime Society and moorers alike, will take effect April 1, 2012, the beginning of the 2012-13 contract year. The changes affecting contractors working on marine assets were recommended by the LMS insurance broker; these, and other changes affecting parking duration and power fees, follow.

### **Contractors**

Starting April 1, 2012, contractors hired to work on the marine asset—vessels, float homes, boat houses, motors, and dinghies—must report to Wharfinger Mark Mercer at the marina office for his approval before commencing work. They will also be required to provide proof of general liability insurance, ship repair legal liability, or both

### **Parking**

After consulting with its members and moorers, LMS will increase the duration of parking in the lower lot from 18 to 24 consecutive hours.

### **Power**

Recent upgrades to the LMS Community Marina electrical system now provide each moorer with a 30-amp metered power outlet, an increase from the 15-amp power supply previously available. Power fees will be based on actual usage. An estimate of the annual power usage for each outlet for the contract year April 1, 2012 to March 31, 2013, was made in January 2012. Meters will be read monthly, billed bi-annually, but information on actual usage will be available on request at the LMS office at any time. A settlement between estimated and actual costs will be made annually.

**February 21, 2012**

LMS Members Meeting

Presentations on waterfront heritage; a proposal for new heritage and cultural displays and programs in areas occupied by LMS; heritage vessels; and an update on our LMS Reception Centre will be featured at the next LMS members meeting, February 21. The meeting will take place at Ladysmith Senior Secondary School, All Purpose Room, commencing at 7:00 PM.

Presenters will include Shirley Blackstock, Marnie Craig, and Tim Richards. Dave Ehrismann will provide the latest news on our Reception Centre.

**SAVE THIS DATE!**

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### OUR LMS BOARD

Two new faces are on the LMS Board of Directors this year. Sonny Hockey and Carlos Pereira were two of the three candidates acclaimed to the board at the LMS 26th annual general meeting on November 29, 2011. The third, Tim Richards is a long-standing board member, having already served one three-year term. All three men will serve three-year terms.

The LMS Board of Directors is now composed of Doug Bell, Marnie Craig, Cliff Fisher, Sonny Hockey, Jim Montgomery, Paul Notte, Betty Pearson, Carlos Pereira, and Tim Richards.



## WHERE HAVE ALL THE PURPLE MARTIN BOXES GONE?

*By Bruce Cousens*

There have been major changes at the Ladysmith Maritime Society Community Marina over the past year. The wharf access ramp and main wharf were upgraded last spring, and the docks were reconfigured to accommodate the new LMS Reception Centre in fall 2011. These changes included removing or relocating many pilings in the way of construction, as well as removing most of the historic, but decaying, old dolphins surrounding the marina. All these structures had supported clusters of Purple Martin nest boxes; now only two remain, east of the marina. When I visited the marina last fall and during the winter, a number of members asked me, “Where have all the martin nest boxes gone?” The next question was whether we will be able to accommodate all the returning birds in spring 2012.

LMSCM hosts the largest martin colony in British Columbia, and one of the two to three largest in western North America, with 65 pairs nesting in 2011, and up to an expected potential record 75-plus pairs returning in 2012. As the most easily accessible large colony on Vancouver Island (or British Columbia), it is our main research colony for initiatives such as the successful geolocator migration tracking study, and our 15-year banding and band recovery study for pioneer research on demographics of Purple Martin populations. It is also an important “index site” for estimating the British Columbia population without monitoring all the provincial colonies, and our flagship colony for key public events, such as the annual Ladysmith Maritime Festival, and Purple Martin Open House. So it is important that we be able to accommodate all the martins returning this spring and summer, or they will simply move elsewhere.

About 25 of the usual 90—95 nest boxes and PVC nest tubes were removed in spring 2011, prior to the reconstruction, but sufficient space was found on existing and new wood pilings to remount them before the birds returned. In fall 2011, more than 30 of the remaining nest boxes (about one-third of the colony) were removed, mostly from the old offshore dolphins, since demolished. The old dolphins had housed the original core of the colony, providing nesting sites in piling cavities before the first nesting boxes were installed.

For reasons not fully understood, historic connections to early nest sites are perpetuated in martin colonies for many years, as seen in a number of other large long-established colonies, of which Cowichan Bay is an example. It appears that the oldest surviving birds, who nested there the previous season, return first to re-establish the colony each spring. These birds tend to return to the same pilings (if not always the same nest boxes) they used previously. This perpetuates the traditional use of these old nest sites to re-establish the colony each year, long after the original birds that initially claimed these sites have disappeared from the population. Younger birds migrate and arrive 2—6 weeks later, choosing nest sites from those not already claimed by early-arriving birds.

One old LMS dolphin was replaced with a single piling marking the end of the gravel bar east of the marina (3—4 more will be added in March), and I supervised placement of an additional three pilings for martin boxes west of the marina, beyond Boat Shed Row, before the pile-driving crew departed for another job. However, because we cannot mount up to 10—12 boxes taken from each of the missing dolphins on single pilings, and many of the wood pilings anchoring the docks, that did not have boxes previously, now hold relocated boxes added last spring, we must now search for additional spaces to house them. A few pilings off the docks can be used, and it may be possible to use some of the metal pilings, once they have been adapted for nesting box attachment. These sites will replace most of the old core nest sites before the martins being to return in early-mid April.

If we have been unsuccessful in our attempts to rehouse the martins, some may go elsewhere, and there will be a decline in nesting pairs, at least in the short term. But I am optimistic that the returning martins will accept the changes and stay to nest at the marina. All being well, we should see at least as many pairs nesting as last year and, potentially, a 10—15 percent increase as the British Columbia population continues to recover in response to the nest box program.



## LADYSMITH MARITIME FESTIVAL 2012

Cultural exchanges with our neighbours, the Stz'uminus First Nation, family fun and entertainment are all hallmarks of the three-day Ladysmith Maritime Festival, planned this year for May 25 through May 27.

This year's festival kicks off with a Friday evening community dinner at the Stz'uminus First Nation Cultural Centre, which provides an occasion to build bridges between our two communities, and to enjoy a traditional First Nations seafood feast. Dinner tickets, price to be announced, will be available at the LMS office and various Ladysmith locales. Further details will be available in the May *Maritimer*.

The festival organization, comprised of volunteers from the Ladysmith community and LMS membership, is already hard at work planning the various events which make the event so popular

with participants from all over Vancouver Island.

For kids, the fun is unlimited. Kids Zone offers all the facets of life on the Main, including pirate dress-ups, treasure hunts, walking the plank, and face-painting. Adults can enjoy live bands and entertainment; harbour tours, arts and crafts displays; heritage boats, and the LMS museum displays. There will also be a fishing derby; commercial vendor booths, including food; a display by the auxiliary coast guard; dragon boats and kayaks. A complete schedule of activities will appear in the next *Maritimer*.

With a festival this large and detailed, additional volunteers, willing to donate their time before, during, and after the three-day event, are essential for its success. There are many opportunities for volunteers in building the overall structure, as

well as acting as hosts to the crowds expected.

If you would like to contribute your skills and time to the success of the 2012 Ladysmith Maritime Festival, please contact Cliff Fisher, 250 245-9236 or [cliffisher@shaw.ca](mailto:cliffisher@shaw.ca); or Dave Ehrismann at the LMS office, 250 245-0109 or [lmscommunitymarina@telus.net](mailto:lmscommunitymarina@telus.net).

**Fishing Rods**

Just how much fun can a kid have with a fishing rod, a net, and a bucket? The answer is A LOT!

Donations of unwanted rods will be gratefully received by LMS so that intrepid fisher folk are well-equipped. And if you feel like joining the kids, even assisting with catching bullheads, your help with the young folk will be appreciated.

If you have rods or time to spare, please call Jim Montgomery at 250 245-5616; [jcmontgomry@yahoo.ca](mailto:jcmontgomry@yahoo.ca).

## LONG-TIME MARITIMER EDITOR RETIRES

Betty Pearson, long-time LMS stalwart, has retired as editor of *Maritimer* to concentrate on her role as the society's treasurer. Many thanks, Betty, for keeping members informed about the society's activities, as well as acting in so many other capacities which have benefitted us all.

Betty's *Maritimer* role is being taken over by Gillian Minifie Murad, a 20-year Ladysmith resident who became an LMS member last year. British-born, Gillian hails from Rugby, Warwickshire, and came to Canada in 1957, changing careers as well as countries. Trained in Britain as a bookseller, she turned to journalism after arriving in this country, and spent several years in the 1960s as a reporter for the now-defunct Toronto *Telegram*. Since then, she has worked as an editor for various book publishers, as well as spending a short time as a Canadian Broadcasting Corporation researcher in Regina. Her last publishing post was at the Canadian Plains Research Center, University of Regina, where she was publications manager.

Gillian is new to on-line publishing, but relishes the challenge it brings. LMS members with articles and items for publication in *Maritimer* can get in touch with her by phone at 250 245-4617, or by email at [gmurad@shaw.ca](mailto:gmurad@shaw.ca)



## AVAST YE, MATEY!

*By Dianna Fisher*

Festival time is fast approaching, so now is the time to start preparing! Luckily there are cheap and easy ways to put together a fantastic pirate costume.

Check the web for pictures of pirate costumes to get an idea of the style of costume you'd like to wear. Now you're ready to start. The best places to find the various parts of your costume are: the local thrift store, Value Village, and the Salvation Army stores in Nanaimo—and even your own closet. Accessories can be found in any of the above mentioned stores, and also the Dollar Stores and Patty's Party Palace in Nanaimo.

For a pirate shirt, any loose-fitting white shirt or blouse will do. If you find one with ruffles or puffy sleeves, that's even better. Remember, pirates didn't have access to irons or washing machines, so wrinkled and stained is fine. For a more casual look, a striped T-shirt is the thing to wear.

A vest worn over the shirt adds to the costume. You may have to improvise here, and cut the sleeves and collar off an old coat or long jacket to make a vest.

Look for dark-coloured, loose-fitting pants or skirt. A leather belt or simply a wide piece of material to use as a sash finishes off that part of your costume. Not too difficult so far, is it?

You can either tie a scarf around your head (can be made from any square piece of material), or you can buy a pirate hat. Many pirates wear a scarf under their hats.

Footwear should be tall boots (ladies can wear sandals). Old, scuffed boots are best, but rain boots work well, too.

Lastly, you need lots of accessories—eye patch, gaudy costume jewellery (necklaces, bangles, hoop earrings—the bigger and brighter the better) and, of course, a sword, knife or pistol.

It's best to start now so that you'll find just the right pieces for your costume. The month of May and the Ladysmith Maritime Festival will be here before you know it. You can join us in a pirate walk through town, and help add to the atmosphere of the festival, all happening in the last full week in May.





## THANK YOU FOR RECYCLING FOR PURPLE MARTINS!

*By Bruce Cousens and Charlene Lee*

LMS members, friends and visitors contributed over 3,200 bottles and cans in summer 2011, and there may still be a bag or two to be sorted and recycled. Summer students, A.J. Cracker, Victor Harris, and Andrew Freundlich, under the director of Wharfinger Mark Mercer, had the onerous task of sorting the returning all these bottles and cans to the Ladysmith Junction Bottle Depot. A big “**Thank You**” to everyone who helped with this endeavour which raised \$263.65 for the BC Purple Martin Recovery Program.

You may continue contributing your beverage bottles and cans when you are on your boat or working at the marina. The bottle/can recycling containers are still on the wharf for your convenience. If you take your bottles/cans to the Junction Bottle Depot and you would like to donate the funds to the BC Purple Martin Recovery Program, please let their staff know, and they will credit the Purple Martin account. All contributions are gratefully accepted.

We look forward to seeing you at the marina when we’re doing our nest box maintenance in preparation for the return of the Purple Martins in April.

## A CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

Calling all volunteers! Winter is still with us, but work continues on a variety of LMS jobs including dock repairs, work on wooden boats, painting, and, once spring arrives, landscape maintenance. Work parties take place weekly on Saturdays, starting at 9:00 AM, and participants meet at Boathouse 13. Lunch will be provided.

Skilled carpenters are particularly needed but—no skills, no experience, no tools? No matter. The unskilled are welcome—perhaps the work parties will provide an opportunity to learn a new skill from the more proficient—and tools are available for your use on site. If you’re not into hammering and painting, you could try your hand at tool maintenance, an essential and on-going job.

For guaranteed indoor work, contact Donna Notte, work party lunch coordinator, who is looking for cooks to provide hot lunches for hungry Saturday volunteers. After a hard morning’s work, volunteers appreciate soups, stews, casseroles, sandwiches and desserts, which can be prepared in the comfort of your own home, then brought to LMS at noon. Funding for the ingredients is provided by LMS. Donna can provide more information for you at 250 245-3190, or at [panotte@shaw.ca](mailto:panotte@shaw.ca).

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