

# London Line

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OCTOBER 2006

The newsletter of the London Power and Sail Squadron

www.powerandsail.ca



## TORONTO BOAT SHOW 2007

*"ANOTHER FUN DAY TO RID THOSE WINTER BLUES"*

The London Squadron is again sending buses to Toronto

### Saturday January 20, 2007

Bus leaves HMCS Prevost 19 Becher Street, London, at 0800 (8:00am) sharp!  
Boarding starts at 0730 (7:30am)

Bus returns to London approximately 2030 -2130, depending on weather conditions

Price is yet to be determined, but will include;

Your return trip to Toronto Boat Show

Snacks, 50/50 draw and bingo games to shorten the trip. Great prizes too

Admission to the Boat Show

Wonderful dinner at the Mandarin Chinese Buffet in Mississauga

Movie will be shown on the return home trip

Most of all, a time to enjoy seeing old friends,

Make new ones and meet new Squadron graduates

Visit our web site for more information on pricing, as it becomes available or call

Sandy McCaw to reserve a seat at 519-471-6414 email [smccaw@uwo.ca](mailto:smccaw@uwo.ca)

**DEADLINE IS DECEMBER 31, 2006**



## CALENDAR

All events start or take place at HMCS Prevost, 19 Becher Street, London unless noted otherwise.

### October

10<sup>th</sup>-Bridge Meeting – 1845

### November

1<sup>st</sup>- Submissions Deadline for December London Line

4<sup>th</sup>- Officer Orientation Course, Wardsville-Time TBD

14<sup>th</sup>-Bridge Meeting – 1845

19<sup>th</sup>- District Meeting- London-Time TBD

### December

3<sup>rd</sup>- Commanders' Levee

1300-1530

12<sup>th</sup>- Bridge Meeting – 1845

31<sup>st</sup>- Deadline for Boat Show Tickets

### January

9<sup>th</sup>- Bridge Meeting – 1845

15<sup>th</sup>- Submissions Deadline for February London Line

20<sup>th</sup>- Boat Show Trip

### February

9<sup>th</sup>- Submissions Deadline for March London Line

10<sup>th</sup>- Instructor Development & Registered Examiner Courses-Time & Location TBD

12<sup>th</sup>- Bridge Meeting – 1845

24<sup>th</sup>- Instructor Development & Registered Examiner Courses-Time & Location TBD

### March

12<sup>th</sup>- Bridge Meeting – 1845

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**G**REETINGS TO ALL OF YOU. Now that October is upon us, we are forced to start focusing upon that dastardly yearly ritual of preparing to store our favourite pastime for another season. I would suggest to each of you that you review the notes from your old Boating manual with regards to winterizing your vessel. It indeed holds some worthy points to ensure that next spring will go smoothly for you.

I am very pleased and grateful for the hard efforts put in by our Executive Officer, Lt/C Larry Monger to allow me to inform all of you that we have now secured a secondary training venue. Commencing immediately, we will be conducting some of our elective courses at Catholic Central Secondary School. The addition of this venue will ease our efforts to offer you, our members a wider array of courses that have shown interest and some that due to space constraints, we have not been able to offer. All courses offered at this location will be on Tuesday evenings, instead of our usual Thursday evenings. HMCS Prevost is and always will be our home base where we will be conducting most of our Primary courses, along with some Elective courses. Now that we have a second evening to schedule classes, our Training Officer, Lt/C Wayne Shorrocks will, I am sure be eager to hear from all who might still be willing to donate some time to assist in the classroom, either as a proctor or as an instructor.

I once again would stress to all of you to watch our web site for updated course offerings at this new location, as well as the HMCS Prevost location. With this new venue just now available, we will keep you informed with what will be offered at each location, along with contact information to register.

Lastly, I would like to take this opportunity to invite all of you to attend this year's Christmas Levee. This year we will be holding this event on Sunday, December 03, 2006 between 1300 and 1530. Please pencil in this date on your calendars, as I would love to see you stop in to enjoy some food, beverage and meet both myself and your current Bridge Officers. We will be there to answer any concerns you may have. The primary reason for this function is to allow London Squadron the opportunity to thank our many volunteers, students and past Commanders, for your dedication of time and efforts, for without each of you, there would be no reason for our existence. Have a great month and please.... Contact me should you have any concerns or questions.



*Cdr Mark Hunsberger*



*London Line*

is the official publication of the London Power and Sail Squadron, a unit of Canadian Power and Sail Squadrons. It is published to inform and advise members and students.

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# London Squadron is Hosting Rendezvous 2007



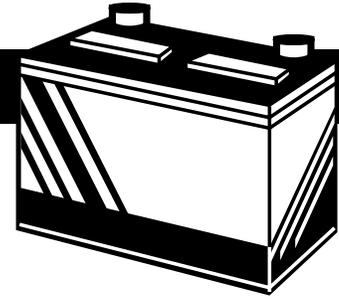
Have you volunteered Yet?

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Contact Alan Sargent

519-433-2736

# THE 12 VOLT BATTERY



*While surfing some of the websites belonging to our fellow squadrons, I came across the following four part article, relating to the 12volt battery and its related systems. Upon contacting the author, I found that he has written many such articles. Arild is a member of the Newmarket squadron and has given his permission for us to run this article in its entirety. The following is part one of a four part series relating to understanding you're sometimes overworked, overlooked, 12 volt system.* – Cdr Mark Hunsberger

## Part 1 of 4

# Battery Maintenance by Arild Jensen

**M**OST OF US like the convenience electrical appliances and gadgets offer. It's easy to forget how they are powered when away from the dock. When you come right down to it, the good old 12-volt battery is the heart of your modern conveniences. It provides power for starting your engine, driving your inverter to make AC and keeps everything from the navigation equipment to the entertainment center going. Therefore, it becomes important that you keep the boat's battery in top shape.

Keeping it clean and dry is only the beginning. Making sure the battery cable connectors are free of corrosion and tight is also only the start. What makes the difference between a battery that serves you well for six years and one that dies after only one season is the electrical care and feeding you give it.

That means the battery has to be sized correctly for the loads you place on it and that you have the right size charger matched to the battery.

The two worst things you can do to a battery are discharge it too deeply and keep it too hot. The first problem is created when you continue depleting the battery past its safe limit. The second problem occurs when you recharge the battery.

When you discharge a battery to the point the terminal voltage is 10.7 volts, the battery is effectively flat. This is when you should begin recharging immediately. The maximum recharge rate is dictated by the battery capacity and should be no more than 20% of that value. If you have a Group 29 battery with a 100-amp hour capacity, then you should not charge it at more than a 20-amp rate. The type of charger you have is also important. The old style Ferro resonant charger quite often has a very high ripple content. This AC ripple causes internal heating. The other source of heating comes from outside the battery. Most batteries are placed in the engine room, right next to the engines. Unfortunately, this does cause a problem in terms of heat. The best place for a battery if located in the engine room is down low and somewhere that receives good ventilation. The worst place is high up and close to mufflers, exhaust manifolds and far away from good ventilation air flow.

Many people will say "but I've done all that and my battery still dies after a year or two; why?" The reason is quite likely sulfation. Sulfation is a natural result of discharging a battery. When the battery is recharged the sulfation is reversed. However, the reversal is not 100% efficient, there is always a small residue left unconverted. Sulfate also hardens with time. If you discharge a battery and let it sit for a while before recharging, the sulfate hardens and becomes harder to reverse. Left too long and it becomes irreversible. This is why it is important to immediately recharge a depleted battery. Sailboats in particular are prone to have problems of this sort. Many boats are equipped with oversize battery banks that allow the vessel to draw from a battery bank for several days before having to recharge. Unfortunately, this practice also encourages the hardening of the sulfate that has already formed as a natural part of using the battery. Cruising sailboats that recharge from the main engine quite often only recharge the battery partially (85 – 90%) because of the inordinately long run time required to top up the last few percent of capacity. The assumption is that the batteries will get recharged eventually when the boat is back home and using the shore power charger.

Vessels lacking a shore power driven charger never manage to fully recharge the battery and these boats are most likely to suffer from premature battery failure. Those boats that are equipped with a shore power charger may end up damaging the battery another way. If the charger is a constant voltage output set at 14.1 volt DC the float charge is high enough that the electrolyte gradually evaporates (boils off) and requires regular topping up. The better chargers have more sophisticated regulators that drop the float voltage to a lower 13.8 or 13.5 volts once the battery is full. This kind of charger is normally called a three-step charger because it adjusts the charge rate according to how full or empty the battery is.

The normal charging creates some internal heat. The better class of charger has a temperature sensor circuit that adjusts the output voltage according to how warm the battery is. For best affect, this sensor should bolt right onto the battery so that it senses the battery's internal temperature, not just the ambient temperature near the battery.

Of late, new battery technology has become available at reasonable cost. Both Gel and AGM cell batteries are promoted as being better for deep cycle duty than the traditional flooded wet cell lead acid battery. A discussion on this aspect would comprise more than one article but suffice it to say that a 12-volt gel or AGM battery requires a different charger than a 12 volt flooded battery. Failure to heed this requirement is another frequent source of premature battery failure. A Ferro resonant (constant voltage taper charge) charger will over charge and permanently damage both gel and AGM batteries. The float voltage is too high and this causes gassing. In a flooded cell, gassing simply means you have to top off the electrolyte more often, but in a sealed cell the damage is permanent. Having a charger that is too small, while less damaging can still result in less than optimum battery performance.

The latest charger technology is called adaptive charging. Newer battery technology like AGM and cylindrical plates such as OPTIMA, can handle a much higher charge rate than the traditional flat plated wet cells, we are accustomed to. Some AGM batteries can handle a charge current equal to their amp hour rating; however this high rate must be discontinued once the battery reaches a charge level of approximately 60% of full. After that a lower constant current rate is used to bring the battery up to about 80% whereupon a taper charge using a fixed voltage of 14.1 is used until the battery is at 90-95% full. This is not a technique you should attempt unless you are quite familiar with the exact characteristics of the specific battery you are using. Consult the manufactures applications engineers

If the recharge time is not very long, chances are you do not get the battery fully recharged, including the necessary float stage before the boat gets underway again and disconnects from the shore power cord. Such consistent under charging will allow sulfates to build up and eventually prevent the battery from accepting a charge at all. Such a battery will appear to die long before it normally should. It has been estimated that nearly all batteries contain enough active material (lead) to provide for a theoretical service life of 10 years, provided the loading and recharge of that battery is maintained within its design parameters. When a battery fails before that time, it is an indication of abuse and failure to observe the design limits of that battery bank. Being realistic and allowing for some inefficiency, you should still be able to get 5-6 years of good service from your battery. Removal of battery sulfation is now becoming more of a science involving either chemical or electronic means.

In our next issue, we will run part two of this four part series on batteries, called

“Loading and Life Cycle of Batteries”. 

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## Boater to Boater

WITH THE BOATING SEASON winding down, though the fall is a really pretty time, there was a good attendance at the most recent Bridge Meeting for our Squadron. New activities are being planned and you should watch the London Line for times, places and dates.

However, one discussion was of particular interest to me. Past Commander Dick DesRosiers recounted some of the rescue experiences with which he has been involved. There seems to be a growing practice by boaters in general of passing by a boat that is showing some signs of distress. Maybe they are aground, motor trouble, just having lunch or whatever but he has witnessed boats streaming by with no intention of investigating. We should be looking out for each other while on the water.

In addition, P/Cdr DesRosiers lamented the fact that once docked or anchored, it is normal for boaters to turn off their radios. Though they are safe, they are unable to hear distress calls from others that have not made it to safe haven before darkness has set in, requesting assistance. Also, one can not be warned of a rapidly advancing weather front that may require additional lines or other precautions to prevent dragging.

Finally, in this electronic world, boaters seem content to rely on GPS fixes to determine their positions. That's fine to know your exact position on this earth but it doesn't tell you about that big rock just ahead. Charts are still a necessity and no prudent boater should leave port without an up-to-date chart for the area that you intend to visit.

*1st Lt. Ralph Smith, AP Treasurer*

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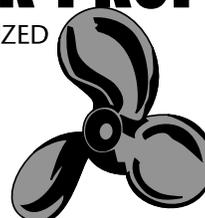
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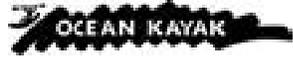
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