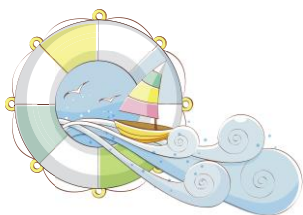


# York Motor Yacht Club



## PORTHOLE

## June 2019



By way of a change this issue of Porthole tackles a more serious issue for us to think about; boat safety and people safety.

Long standing YMYC member, Raymond Howe, is probably the most knowledgeable boating men I have ever met in my 15 years of pleasure boating on the Ouse.

Raymond is and has been a Boat Safety Scheme Examiner since its creation in 1996. He was the Boat Yard and Marina Manager at Yacht Service/Naburn Marina (now York Marina) from 1966 until about four years ago. He has also been a member of YMYC - as a boat owner and now as a social member - for more years than he cares to remember. He was on the committee for many years and was Commodore for two years.

Recently, in his role as a BSS Examiner, Raymond has seen an increase in boats which would not only fail their BSS on particular safety issues relating to fuel, but are highly dangerous and also not insured. Due to this increase, he would like to highlight to members of the boating community the steps **you** can take to ensure the safety of yourself and your

family, members of the public, and also to ensure that your insurance is valid.

Here are Raymond's words of advice ..... Denis (editor)

When carrying out a BSS, **Question 5.1** relates to **"Outboard and portable combustion engines and portable fuel systems"**

**Question 5.4.2R asks:**

*Are all outboard and portable combustion engines with integral petrol or LPG tanks stored to ensure that leaking fuel or escaping vapour will not enter the interior of the vessel?*

So far this year I have examined four boats with outboard motors or generators stored either in the engine room or in the Lazerette. This is not only **highly dangerous** and a fail for the BSS, but **null and voids the boat's insurance**.

**Question 7.1.1R asks:**

*Are all gas cylinders and containers stored in a position where any leakage will be directed safely overboard?*

I have examined several boats lately that have had the second cylinder stored in the bilge. On two occasions this year, I have found four or five cylinders for small portable hobs sitting under the sink in the galley. This is not only **highly dangerous** and a fail for the BSS, but **null and voids the boat's insurance**.

Like an car's MOT, a BSS check is only a photograph of a moment in time. The certificate states that "it is the owner's ongoing responsibility to keep the vessel in good condition in accordance with the safety requirements". Recently, I was aboard a boat carrying out a BSS check, when a boat I had examined some weeks earlier passed by. She has an aft cockpit and the gas locker is sited in the stern. Standing in front of the gas locker was a large propane gas cylinder. This could drain into the wheelhouse and the engines below. **This is highly dangerous, and once again will null and void the insurance.**

**Question 8.3.1R asks:**

*Are petrol-engine spaces free of LPG and/or liquid fuelled appliances?*

I came across two boats last year that had been fitted with new Eberspacher diesel heater in the engine room - one was getting its fuel through a plastic fuel pipe from an outboard fuel tank just sitting in the bilge. **This is highly dangerous and null and voids the insurance.**

When boating, it is also necessary to think of the third party - i.e. other members of the public. 'The third party' can often sound quite unimportant and theoretical.

Last year, a Bayliner was moored stern to stern with another motor cruiser. The owner of the Bayliner was running the engine to charge the batteries. After some time - I understand about  $\frac{3}{4}$  hour - he went to call on the people on the boat astern of him. He found them unconscious. They were taken to hospital but sadly died. Shockingly, the carbon monoxide from his boat's exhaust killed them. They were 'the third party'.

A new check has been introduced as of the 1<sup>st</sup> April. However, some of the points on the check are marked "A" and these are "advice checks".

#### **6.4.1R asks:**

*If the vessel has one or more accommodation spaces are the correct number of carbon monoxide alarms provided?*

#### **6.4.2A asks:**

*If any solid fuel stoves are installed, and if the vessel has berths present within any accommodation space, is a carbon monoxide alarm provided within the same accommodation space(s) as the fuel stove(s)?*

This is an advice check only because the BSS protects the third party. If the owner of the boat chooses not to fit an alarm in the stove area it is up to them.

#### **6.4.3R asks:**

*Are carbon monoxide alarms in open view and of a suitable type?*

#### **6.4.4R asks:**

*Are carbon monoxide alarms in good condition?*

A test is carried out on them during the examination. It is then the boat owner's responsibility to ensure they continue to work, for the safety of themselves and others.

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I hope this has given food for thought. The BSS check is there to keep **everyone** safe - yourselves and your families, but also other people and theirs. It is also there to ensure that if anything were to happen, you would be insured. If your boat passes its examination but you then alter things that would have meant it failed, you may still have your BSS saying it passed, but your insurer may not pay out. You are also risking your own safety and that of others.

British Waterways took over the responsibility for the Ouse and Foss Navigation in 1989. The government asked them what they were doing to make certain that the waterways they managed were safe for the third party i.e. boats moored close to or in locks, people walking the tow path etc. They didn't have an answer to this and so something needed to be put in place. After many meetings in London, all of which I attended representing the RYA and therefore the boat owners, The Boat Safety Scheme was introduced in 1996. Its

primary aim to keep people safe.

**Please ensure you are playing your part to ensure that not only “the third party” but also yourself and your family are kept as safe as possible.**

Enjoy the rest of the boating season - let's hope for good weather!

Raymond

