

10,000 Pointers To River Safety

Boat Company's Efforts To Cope With New Problem
by Carl Whiteley

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A SMALL pocket sized chart of the river and Christchurch Harbour, issued by the Tuckton Riverside Services, Ltd., is playing an important part in the town-wide effort to establish safer and accident free boating.

The need to establish greater safety precautions on the beautiful but sometimes tricky waters of Christchurch has been emphasised time and again, particularly during the past few months.

Members of the Chamber of Trade have expressed deep concern and last week the matter was taken up by Christchurch Council.

By handing out 10,000 river charts a year, the Riverside Services can claim to be making a big contribution towards the safety target.

The charts give guidance from Tuckton Bridge to The Run at the Avon Quay. A dotted line marks the main channel, which is also indicated by buoys. Danger spots are given full prominence.

GREAT INTEREST.

Although the charts are provided specifically for customers using the "T.R.S." self-drive motor boats, they are available to anyone interested. And many requests are made for them, Mr. P. Taylor, a member of the firm, told the C.T. "People take a great interest in them and we never find them left lying around in the boats."

Mr. Taylor felt it would be impossible to provide life jackets for the smaller boats. "If we did provide them we could not ensure that our customers would wear them." The possible danger, he thought, was when youngsters, with their own small boats or canoes, used the river during the quieter times of the evening.

SIMPLE.

His company's boats are designed to ensure the utmost safety to passengers and the self-drive boat are very simple to operate. The regular 20 minute "Funnel Boat" service from Tuckton Bridge to Mudeford beach provides additional safety. They are always about to give a "helping hand" if necessary.

The Riverside Services came into operation in 1951 with only a "lean-to" for headquarters. Since that time the company, headed by Lieut. Cmdr. Michael Wallrock, R.N.R., who is a Master Mariner in steam and sail, and Mr. Taylor, has developed rapidly.

A huge workshed towers over the "lean-to" and a new H.Q. office stands in a picturesque riverside rose garden, tended by Mr. Taylor. Also in the grounds is the Tuckton Yacht Club H.Q.

At the service of yacht owners and yachtsmen are repairs, chandlers, under cover storage, boat building and a long pontoon which provides ideal "alongside" facilities. Recently the yard fully equipped a steel life boat for an underwater swimming club in the Mediterranean. This was sailed from Christchurch to Dieppe and then shipped overland.

The "Funnel Boat" service has been in operation since about 1930. There are now six passenger boats plying between Tuckton Bridge and Mudeford beach, calling at Wick Ferry and Christchurch Quay. This service, which is run in conjunction with Bournemouth Corporation Transport, keeps to a strict time table.

UP TO DATE.

The boats are "skippered" by fully experienced boatmen and are equipped with up-to-date life-saving facilities.

Self drive boats, which have been operated by "T.R.S." for over four years, are a big attraction to holiday makers. There are 35 boats of various sizes and they operate from Tuckton Bridge, Wick Ferry and Christchurch Quay. A number of these have been built at the firm's yard, which was previously owned by Mr. Edwin Mens.

An attractive feature of the self-drive boats is a small pennant bearing the initials "T.R.S." in blue on a white background.

"DISAPPEARED"

While 17 of these boats were moored overnight recently at Christchurch Quay the pennants from everyone were snapped off and "disappeared". Three of the boats were also loosened from their moorings and were found drifting. This damage was reported to the police.

The river is undoubtedly one of the main attractions of the surrounding area. With a "T.R.S." self-drive motor boat, an hour or two can be well spent in comfort and safety.