

# SOUTH WEST SOUNDINGS

The Newsletter of the SOUTH WEST MARITIME HISTORY SOCIETY  
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Edited by Jonathan Seagrave

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**WEBSITE.** [www.swmaritime.org.uk](http://www.swmaritime.org.uk)

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## EDITORIAL

In November at NMM Falmouth, we were again able to make our annual Awards to members for outstanding contributions to our field, whether through active preservation or historical research.

Awards were made to Dave Hills ( website and long term service ) ; John Beck ( research and publication on Falmouth packets ); Roger Hall (service to restoration and conservation of small craft ); Will Stirling (construction of fine reproduction vessels, Victory gig and 18 c. lugger *Alert* )

Whilst this scheme was getting off the ground, the Committee has identified and agreed candidates. Now that the Awards are established, we would encourage nominations from all the membership, to be sent to Dale Thomas, for consideration for the coming year.

A reminder if anyone is still interested in sailing cross channel in a heritage vessel in the spring, some 4 people have expressed interest sofar, so we still hope to arrange a trip, although probably not a charter. Contact David Clement in the first instance.

Agreement has now been reached with Plymouth and West Devon Records office to give access to Judith Godfrey's manuscript and research material and we hope publication will be progressed during the course of the year.

Our thanks to David Clement for negotiating this, and also for continuing to build contacts with other Societies, notably the Naval Dockyards Society and the South African society. If you are involved in related Societies, it is always worth remembering that we are keen to do joint meetings and activities.

## **PLEASE TAKE NOTE**

It appears that the Society has been the victim of an attempted fraud, not by a Society member. Someone appears to have stolen Julia Creeke's identity, probably from a quite old letter from her time as Chair, which was thrown out. She is meticulous about shredding so it is most unlikely that this was from her home.

Her signature was forged and an attempt then made to remove funds from the Society account. Fortunately, this was spotted **and no loss has taken place**.

However, we would ask all of you to take particular care to shred any paperwork that might have a Committee member signature on it.

Our meeting programme for 2010 is still evolving, after our busy anniversary year, further details will be posted on the website as soon as they are available

Our very best wishes for the coming year

**Jonathan Seagrave**

**Next copy date: February 19<sup>th</sup> 2010**

### **Errata and Omissions**

Several errors slipped into issue 76 for which apologies are due

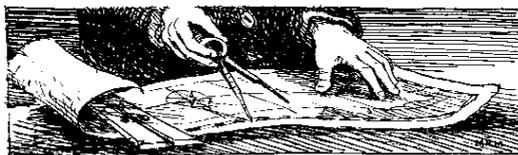
David Fenn's father was Horace not Horatio.

The contact number for *Morwenna* is 0845 034 5388

Helen Doe is on the Committee

Mike Baker's number was incorrectly listed. He is best contacted via email ( contact form on the website )

The inside cover pictures in edition 76 were *Morwenna* on trials (*front*); and *Irene* off Portishead pulls away from *Kathleen and May* after the Bristol Harbour Festival August 9<sup>th</sup> 2009. (*Morwenna* website , J Seagrave)



## FUTURE MEETINGS AND OTHER EVENTS

March 13<sup>th</sup> New researchers in Maritime History Conference Exeter  
University ffi Maria Fusaro

*April 17<sup>th</sup> Naval Dockyards Society Greenwich – ffi see end*

April 24<sup>th</sup> South West Shipping Show, Portishead. Society stand

April date tbc Bude ffi Martin Hazell

June 5<sup>th</sup> AGM, Exeter

September 18/19<sup>th</sup> Maritime History Conference, Exeter

October date tbc Launch of David McGregor Library, Bristol

*(Italics indicate an event of interest but not organised directly by the Society)*

**Confirmation of events will be published either in the next edition or in calling notices for bookings, which will be sent to members at the appropriate time.**

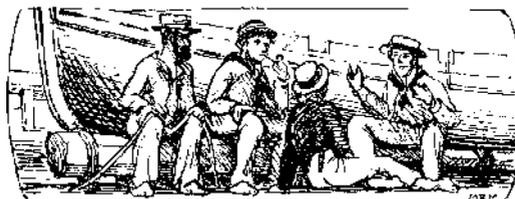
### **NMM Falmouth**

An exciting exhibition on **Lighthouses "Life on the Rocks"** commencing Feb 6<sup>th</sup> 2010 at Nat Maritime Museum Falmouth. Lectures by Gordon Partridge , a former Light House Keeper, form part of the event.

#### **Dodman to Blackhead – Wreck and Rescue**

**Date:** 29<sup>th</sup> January 2010, 6.30 pm . 1<sup>st</sup> February 2010 12.30pm

Over the centuries more than a hundred ships have been wrecked on the notorious Manacles rocks off the Lizard peninsula. Join Falmouth's senior pilot, **David Barnicoat** to learn more. **Ffi 01326 214546**



## REPORTS OF MEETINGS

### **Royal Western Yacht Club, - Plymouth. History of Yachting 31<sup>st</sup> October 2009**

Some 55 visitors, mainly our members, attended with some support from the RWYC.

We were fortunate indeed to have some very distinguished speakers. **Maldwin Drummond**, well known yachting historian, gave us a sweeping survey of yachting history, peppered with good anecdotes, starting from the Napoleonic period when “yachts” of 70 tons carried guns. The formation of the Royal Yacht Club in 1817, although not the very first, was a key factor in making sailing a socially accepted recreation for the wealthy.

In due course, there came big changes, the evolution of “model” yacht clubs with much smaller vessels, under 8 tons, and affordable by the middle classes, and the development of Corinthian rules where the owner had to do some work, i.e. steer !

He took us through the start of the America’s Cup and the original challenge in 1851, and how it has evolved and is now sadly as much a legal battle as a sailing one. The wheel has come full circle with professional crews being used from the mid 80’s.

The Victorian era was also the heyday of the steam yacht, built on clipper lines and “ eye sweet”. The first transatlantic race in 1905 for the Kaiser cup was another benchmark setting a new dimension in competition, followed in 1925 by the founding of the Ocean Racing Club and the first Fastnet race. In the 1960’s round the world solo voyages and then races, completes the modern picture.

He also showed a picture of the remarkable “*Maltese Falcon*” square rigger, which he had seen doing 18 knots, the result of the “Mine is bigger” outlook of HP founder Kaplan, perhaps the ultimate high tech gentleman’s sailing yacht.

**Paul Spooner** followed with a detailed account of the restoration of *Mariquita* and *Lulworth* William Fife vessels from 1911 by his firm, Fairlie Restorations.

For *Mariquita*, he had the advantage of Fife’s original plans, offsets etc, which had not usefully survived for *Lulworth*. Both vessels had been houseboats for many years, and the restoration require physical resetting of partly collapsed steel frames to permit accurate reconstruction of these composite vessels. .

The brief for both vessels was to restore to near original condition with the object of racing in traditional fashion. Engines and electronics were concealed, and only minor concessions made to modernity- a bucket is not on in a superyacht, however authentic! Heads and other fittings were made to 30’s designs.

Whilst the hulls were largely new construction, using similar timber, the interiors had survived quite well and were largely original, although buffed up and restored, with some added element of modern comfort.

The need for engines had led to small compromises to retain as far as possible the original handling. The new vessels rode 2 cm deeper with a couple of tons extra, modern welding saving enough weight to offset most of the engine, bulkhead etc necessary in a modern vessel.

The reconstruction took several years, a lot longer than Fairlie’s 9 months or so. The results looked superb, and we were all a little envious of those whose pockets are deep enough not to have to ask how much – though they came in at 10% over the first estimate, pretty good by most standards.

## **Tim Bass**

Whilst Maldwin had spoken of seagoing yachts, Tim took us through the history of the dinghy –the word itself is derived from Hindi- with particular reference to the SW, which played an important part in its development.

Early clubs at Salcombe and on the Exe sailed adapted watermen's boats, but these evolved to more modern designs that sailed well when heeling. Unlike the gentlemen's yacht these were one or two handers, a very participant sport.

He showed many pictures from a Salcombe museum scrapbook, including one early pioneer, Miss Ivy Carus-Wilson, clearly a lady of considerable character, who took her boat to events by train. Her description of *Myosotis* was a clear account of planing before Uffa Fox developed planing boats in the 20's.

After WW I the International 14 came along, and Morgan Giles and others developed more modern designs.

Other locations that had clubs early on were Liverpool and East Anglia, though the Morgan Giles challenge won easily.

**John Tweed** from the National Sailing Academy took us through the growing British success at sailing events, especially in recent Olympics, and the development of the Academy from a derelict naval base to a sophisticated facility ready to host the sailing in 2012. Problems included eco issues with samples of rare species of worms going AWOL ! but there had been strong local support. We all hope for continued success in 2012.

Finally, **David Moody** gave us an overview of the long history of Moody's involvement in yachts and small craft. The business was a family owned and run for 6 generations, but sold out in 2005, though the new owners continue the famous name. He had been brought up surrounded by yachts and boats, including the *Endeavours* as houseboats in front of his home.

David had numerous photos of the site and surroundings on the Hamble, which itself had a long history of shipbuilding going back to pre Napoleonic times, though less well known than Beaulieu. He took us through the pre-war era when yachts were first built alongside commercial craft, and building HDML's in WWII- smaller than Fairmiles, they were wholly built by Moodys, not "flat packed". The surviving *Medusa* is being restored with lottery funding.

David told tales of the designers who had made Moodys famous, and illustrated some of the best-known vessels. In the latter years from 1973, the partnership with Marine Projects had moved output from small runs of wooden vessels to mass production of grp vessels, winning a Queens Award for exports.

He has written a book, and was hampered by the loss of the archive in the great storm of 1988, but had been helped by many people to fill out details of the vessels and yard.

Our thanks go to RWYC for their hospitality and **Mike Bender** and **Julia Creeke** for organising such distinguished speakers and a very good day.

## **Exeter Conference 2009**

[ David Clement has written a very good and detailed account of this major event, part sponsored by the Society. The full account will appear on the website, and a summary in a future edition. Ed ]

## ARTICLES

### **The UK Ship Preservation Network**

The National Historic Ships Register has set this up, with the object: -

To bring together existing maritime heritage groups (e.g. Maritime Curators Group, Advisory Committee on National Historic Ships) in one inclusive forum to share experiences and knowledge on a regular basis

To encourage dialogue and broader engagement with institutions and groups who have maritime collections or interests (e.g. English Heritage, National Trust, local maritime heritage trusts)

To discuss issues of contemporary note to the maritime heritage sector

As well as members of the above groups, the welcome is extended to all maritime museums nationally, historic vessels, to museums and archives with maritime holdings, to maritime history societies and to others such as English Heritage and the National Trust as well as individuals interested in maritime heritage.

Meetings have been held in Solent Portsmouth and Bristol areas, details of the Solent are below.



## UK Ship Preservation Network: Update

On 17 September, National Historic Ships held an update meeting for the Solent area on board its flagship ss *Shieldhall* in Southampton. This was attended by a good cross-section of representatives from boatbuilding companies, training & education facilities, insurance groups, heritage projects and historic vessels in the area.

The Solent will become one of four pilot networks being launched by National Historic Ships in spring 2010. The areas of Solent, Mersey, Bristol and Medway have been chosen as key networks, because they demonstrate a natural grouping of facilities or skills and a high concentration of historic vessels. National Historic Ships will shortly be revealing the official name and logo for the UK ship preservation network and is currently working on a dedicated website, which will cover the whole country, as well as providing pages for each pilot area.

The ship preservation network offers a unique opportunity for vessel owners, businesses, heritage organisations and all those with an interest in high quality maritime craftsmanship to communicate with each other. It will provide a marketing framework for the sector, as well as forging partnerships between those with similar aims, thereby promoting funding opportunities and achieving results in a way that would not be possible on an individual basis.



If you have skills or services which could contribute to the Network, please sign up for a free entry in our online Directory of contacts at:  
<http://www.nationalhistoricships.org.uk/pages/directory-of-skills-and-services.html>

Alternatively, contact National Historic Ships to learn more about our aims, or watch this space for further information coming soon on the launch of the ship preservation network.

National Historic Ships, Park Row, Greenwich, London SE10 9NF  
tel: 0208 312 8558 email: [info@nationalhistoricships.org.uk](mailto:info@nationalhistoricships.org.uk)  
[www.nationalhistoricships.org.uk](http://www.nationalhistoricships.org.uk)

Hannah Cunliffe from National Historic Ships has also been working on a publication and website which will seek to bring a wide range of information together in one place as part of this process. She says: -

“I have been working on a new project which I thought might be of interest to the South West Maritime History Society. National Historic Ships is producing a new guidance publication with the working title of the 'Conservation Pilot Book'. This is a much-needed handbook aimed at vessel owners, craftsmen, heritage organisations and all those with an interest in ship preservation. It looks at the history of conservation, then taking the reader through the stages of assessing the significance of a vessel, acquiring, stabilising and understanding it, before moving on to practical conservation. The book clearly outlines the choices to be made between conservation for static display or operational use. Once the reader has decided which route to take, the book addresses the various options available in terms of preservation, restoration, reconstruction, adaptation, maintenance and replication, explaining which is appropriate depending on the circumstances.

We will be circulating the final draft of the book for consultation in January 2010 and have engaged a graphic designer to see us through to publication. The book will be published in hard copy form in May 2010 and National Historic Ships is also designing a section for online resources on our website, which will act as a digitised bibliography for the book, thus allowing us to regularly update it with new items and act as a primary source for publications which are now out of date and only downloadable via the web.”

Your Editor has volunteered to act as contact for the Bristol group for the Society. Do please send in any views or information, which you wish to be conveyed.

Ffi Hannah Cunliffe Tel: 0208 312 8558 / 0208 312 6514

Email: [hannah.cunliffe@nationalhistoricships.org.uk](mailto:hannah.cunliffe@nationalhistoricships.org.uk)



## REVIEWS

*An Illuminating Experience.* Gordon Medicott. *Dunbeath, Caithness: Whittles, 2009. 131pp. £14.99*

This is an account of ex-Principal Keeper Medicott's time in the Lighthouse Service from 1966, after six years in the Merchant Navy, till being made redundant with the automation of lighthouses in 1998. He briefly describes most of his postings, with an accompanying picture, and the nature of the work - whether the lamp was oil fired, or a large bulb, the use of explosives for some fog horns - stopped in IRA times, etc. It's pretty factual stuff, not too much about his feelings. The Appendices list the lighthouses he served at; the Hornsby Oil Engine; the Explosive Fog Signal; the Incandescent Oil Burner; the Keepers' Pay Scale 1968 - starting at £627 on joining to £880, to reach a maximum £930 for a Principal Keeper, from which your food had to be found. Medicott joined a flourishing service and finished with an extinct one. So, if lighthouses and the lighthouse service is an area of your interest, hint to your nearest and dearest about Christmas....

### **Mike Bender**

[ From 6 February 2010 National Maritime Museum Cornwall will be shining a light on the world of lighthouses and their keepers. From the massive scale of these triumphs of engineering to the tall tales of the lighthouse keepers themselves, *Lighthouses: Life on the Rocks* will illuminate these stories with hands-on exhibits and interactive displays. See NMM website for details . Ed ]

*A Century of Friendship Breton Fishermen in Cornwall and Scilly* by John McWilliams. ISBN 978-0-9554398-1-0. 192 pp, St. Ives Trust, £20 St. Ives Trust, Upper Parish Rooms, St. Andrew's Street, St. Ives, Cornwall, England TR26 1AH.

In writing this fascinating account of the activities of the Breton fishermen in Cornish waters and their relationships with the Cornish fishermen, John McWilliams, as well as trawling through the records reports and accounts, has drawn on many years first hand experience of these hardy men and their stout fishing craft. As a boy and youth, growing up at St. Ives, John developed close contacts with these visitors and their colourful bateaux, which frequently ran into St. Ives Bay to shelter from the sweeping South Westerly storms.

Here, like many boys in West Cornish harbours [including your reviewer] John sculled their buoyant punts [that's 'over the stern' sculling with a single oar – not you fancy river stuff in lightweight shells], but more importantly he got to know the fishermen and learnt their regional language. In time John made working passages to France in these 'crabbers,' and met their families at home. All of which engendered a deep appreciation for this hardy race of independent fishermen, with so many parallels to the Cornish fishermen of his home.

Universally known as 'crabbers' these colourful craft, with their full bows and sweeping sheer running down to a low stern, were in fact fishing for crawfish, though crabs and lobsters were also taken in their distinctive pots. From 1902 onwards these craft hailing from Camaret, Audierne, Concarneau, Douarnenez, and a host of other small Breton ports, battled their way in increasing numbers to fish in our Cornish waters, principally off the Seven Stones reef. While the fishing was at times very good, few made their fortunes, and a distinctive feature of these men and their craft, were the very obvious mis-coloured but carefully stitched patches to their clothes and sails alike. Economy was their watchword.

There were inevitable clashes with the English fishery authorities, which saw many an appearance of these Breton skippers in our Magistrates Courts, and which in their turn attracted a vociferous local press. But in reality general relationships between the Cornish and the Breton

fishermen were respectful and cordial, and in this book John goes a long way to put this cultural interrelationship into a true perspective.

Well illustrated with John's sketches, and numerous monochrome and colour photographs, these are effectively combined with Michael Pellowe's attractive and accurate paintings of representative examples of these craft. Throughout the text a great many of the craft concerned in this fishery are identified by name and fishing number, while the rewards and risks of this hazardous fishery are clearly set out in the accompanying accounts.

If I have any criticisms of the book it is that in the binding the text has been carried tight into the central gutter, and unfortunately there is no index. But these points do not detract from the unique insight John has given us into this niche fishery, in a very readable book that is the product of a lifetime's personal experience and study. Highly recommended and not to be missed.

**Tony Pawlyn**

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***Well I Never Knew That*** by John Parker, (pub. Ed. Gaskell, Bideford, 2008) illustrated, at £8 - ISBN 190676902 - 8

This is an excellent book to dip into, and also for those trivia questions at Christmas time. Having taught some English to foreign language students I realise what a difficult tongue English is. Grammar rules are quite flexible and colloquial expressions abound. Therefore it is quite reasonable to expect many words and expressions to originate from nautical and 'ship board speak'.

John Parker from North Devon, a folk song and shanty singer who has been involved in nautical events and fundraising for many years, has collected a sizable kit bag full of nautical expressions and individual words in everyday use which can be traced back to the days of sail. These entries, listed in A to Z format, are separate to 'Jackspeak' or RN slang. What is so surprising is how many expressions common today can be traced back to our nautical forefathers. As with some other words in the English language, the meaning of a number have altered over time. A 'bully' on land today would mean a person who terrorises those weaker than themselves, but a 'bully crew' would have been looked up to as strong, able and well respected! In the ballad, 'Ten thousand miles' 'a good ship and a bully crew' is sought for, although was 'Bully' Forbes (the subject in another folk song), the 19th century North Atlantic packet ship skipper, very able or just a hard driving commander hated by his crew?

This is a handy little paperback packed with 100 pages of nautical lexicon with, we are told, proceeds going to maritime charities. It would make an excellent stocking filler. The book is certainly not full of 'bilge' as entries are 'as clear as a bell', the author being very 'clued up' there being no 'dead wood'. So go out and buy this offering if you are 'feeling blue' or 'pooped' - it will cheer you up. It only costs eight 'quid'!

Here is the text from the frontispiece.....

'A ship is called 'She' because  
There is always a great deal of bustle about her.  
There is usually a gang of men about.  
She has a waist and stays;  
And it takes a lot of paint to keep her looking good.  
It is not the initial expense that breaks you,  
It is the upkeep.  
She can be all decked out,  
But it takes an experienced man to handle her correctly.  
Without a man at the helm'  
She is absolutely uncontrollable.  
She shows her topsides,  
And hides her bottom,  
And when coming into port  
She always heads for the bouys.'

**Martin Hazell**

*Tramp to Queen* by Captain John Treasure Jones Edited by Richard J. Tennant, with an introduction by Commodore R W. Warwick O.B.E.

This is one of the most interesting, informative . and entertaining maritime books that I have ever read - being the sea-life story of a sailor of our own time - that is, to many of us, most of the twentieth century. His descriptions of places, situations and people are positively graphic, as are his own reactions.

It is not a 'log' as such but rather a collection of notes made by himself. These have been collected by his son-in-law Richard Tennant, whose own notes are added.

Although the son of a Welsh farmer, his forebears were men of the sea, and he elected to follow their tradition. Thus, at the age of fifteen he was signed on as an apprentice aboard a coal-burning, coal carrying tramp at Cardiff. She was the *Grelgrant* of 4,785 tons.

Berthed under the coal-tips she was covered from stem to stem with coal dust. He then describes the apprentice accommodation - a box, 15' x 9' to house six apprentices - basic furniture and no 'mod-cons'. From his description the reader could almost *smell* it!

In this very basic, hard-working steamship he started to learn his chosen profession from the bottom up and eventually, with a very successful apprenticeship behind him he steadily gained seniority in some of the leading shipping companies of the day.

He joined the R.N.R in 1923 as a Probationary Midshipman . At the outbreak of war in 1939 he was given officer's rank in an Armed Merchant Cruiser. He saw plenty of action, sailing with the Atlantic Convoys, but survived to return to the Merchant Navy as a Senior Officer with Cunard. As a Senior Captain he commanded all their beautiful and famous trans-Atlantic liners of the day, including the unmatched *Queen Mary*.

In addition to eleven Appendices there are many excellent black and white illustrations, and a whole section is given over to superb colour reproductions of liner paintings by artists Kenneth Vard and Stephen J. Card. This is a veritable picture gallery in its own right, and the colour reproduction is impeccable.

Surprisingly, this lovely book is classified as paperback, but it is worthy of taking its place alongside any of the well known expensively bound classics. I will treasure my copy!

**Peter Stuckey , President, Bristol Shiplovers' Society**

***The Voyage Of The Beagle Darwin's Extraordinary Adventure Aboard FitzRoy's Famous Survey Ship*** by James Taylor ISBN: 978-1844860661 Published by Conway Maritime, Anova Books Company Ltd, 10, Southcombe Street, London, W14 0RA £20.00

The story of Darwin and FitzRoy and the survey vessel HMS *Beagle* has been told on a number of occasions, perhaps most memorably in the 'factional' account by Harry Thompson "*This Thing of Darkness*" which was listed for the Man Booker Award. So what sets this book under review apart?

James Taylor is an auctioneer with Phillips Fine Art Auctioneers, where he is head of Victorian Paintings, and was previously curator of art at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, and his experience does indeed show in the choice of the remarkable illustrations, many in full colour, used throughout this remarkable work.

The book has been produced to celebrate the bi-centenary of the birth of Charles Darwin and the 150<sup>th</sup>. Anniversary of his renowned work "*The Origin of Species*" – both of which occur in 2009. James Taylor has adopted a unique way of telling the story in an extremely thorough way, weaving together the various strands of the voyage in a manner not previously adopted, which is much more informative as you see the characters 'in the round.' The book, which is 265mm x 200mm hardback and runs to 192 pages, opens with a detailed introduction to the subject and Darwin's published work with the passage of the *Beagle*, setting out the ports of call and extracts from the logbooks of both FitzRoy and Darwin, and their letters home.

This leads to the first chapter covering the origin and design of *HMS Beagle* a standard *Cherokee* class brig, modified and re-rigged as a ship and adapted for survey work to South America and Patagonia in particular. We note how her previous commander, Captain Stokes took his own life when suffering from depression, which resulted in Lt. Robert FitzRoy being appointed to the command. He had brought a number of native Fuegians back with him to London, making the promise that they would be returned, and true to his word he brought them back to Patagonia on his passage with Darwin. The choice and design of the vessel is fully dealt with, as are the modifications for its surveying service.

We then turn to a detailed examination of Robert FitzRoy, who founded the basis of our current Meteorological Office based in Exeter, and his character, as described by Darwin. FitzRoy's narrative of the passage is also considered and compared with Darwin's autobiography. His round-the-world voyage lasted over 4 years 9 months, ending in Falmouth in 1836. FitzRoy's fate was to take his own life during a period of depressive illness – a very sad ending. Despite heading the minute department of the Admiralty/Board of Trade responsible for forecasting and detailing weather records, the British Government failed to fully support his embryonic ideas, in contrast with the experience of Lt. Maury in the United States.

Chapter 3 looks at his officers and crew, and gives a unique perspective on a little reported aspect, giving details of their recruitment and work aboard this overcrowded vessel, and clearly shows the compassion FitzRoy had for his men.

Chapter 4 then looks in detail at the personality of Charles Darwin, who had failed to qualify as a doctor because he was unable to stomach anatomy, and then went to study for life as a clergyman. An unlikely man to change man's view of his origins! That he was a gifted naturalist and a good companion to FitzRoy despite the occasional argument, is clearly seen, and the detailing of some of his instruments is interesting. He was financially assisted by his father to the tune of £1,500. Darwin was a prolific letter writer and much of the information has been gleaned from his private correspondence.

In later life relations with FitzRoy became strained, with Darwin receiving accolades from the scientific world, which although well deserved served to devalue FitzRoy's equally valuable work in weather related predictions.

Chapter 5 examines the art of surveying the seas in the 1830s, as FitzRoy was the senior surveyor on the voyage, as well as being the Captain of *HMS Beagle*. The methodology adopted and the development of the art from earlier times is examined, together with the influence of other surveyors, such as Schetky, Professor of Drawing in the Royal Naval Office at Portsmouth amongst others. Examples of FitzRoy's work are given, such as his chart of the Galapagos Islands surveyed in 1836.

I have commented on the superb reproductions of illustrations, many of which are from the pens of Conrad Martens and his predecessor, Augustus Earle who were appointed as 'draughtsmen' for the voyage and provided many of the topical illustrations of places visited. We see some wonderful examples of their work throughout this book, both of local personalities and the more traditional land and sea scapes.

The book concludes with the legacy of the *Beagle* after she paid off in 1836, and the story of the two principle characters, FitzRoy, his marriage and employment, and the genesis of weather forecasting; and Darwin who married Emma Wedgwood (daughter of Josiah) by whom he had ten children. Darwin suffered bouts of ill-health, possibly brought on by psychological pressures arising from his evolutionary thinking, his collections of flora and fauna, and demands on him as a lecturer. His publication of *The Origin of Species* saw a deep rift develop with FitzRoy, who believed in more traditional values, which is beautifully summarised by our member Rear-Admiral Guy Ritchie, previously Hydrographer to the Navy, who says "*Whereas Darwin saw the shells and sea-washed pebbles of the plains of Patagonia as evidence of the instability of the earth's crust, FitzRoy could envisage no improvement of man since creation and believed that there were no separate beginnings of savage races, but that all were the direct descendants of Adam and Eve,*"

With 155 illustrations, most of which are in colour, some spreading across two pages of this gem of a book, it has to be exceptional value at just £20.00 for a hardback publication. I chose this book as my best read in the International books I have seen in 2008, and I do not think that any readers will be disappointed.

**D. B. Clement**

### **BOOKS Notified**

**The following books have been published by members:-**

***The Court, the Atlantic and the City - Sir Walter Raleigh v William Sanderson*** by Michael Franks special offer £ 12.50 in p&p South and West Books Field House Mapledurwell Hants RG25 2LU.

**Julian Stockwin – see letter below**

We would welcome an offer to review these books.

### **LETTERS**

**Julian Stockwin** writes

This year has been somewhat of a milestone year for me - publication of my non-fiction *Stockwin's Maritime Miscellany* in July and my 10th book in the Kydd series, *Invasion* in October.

Both books are carried by internet sellers like Amazon and high street bookstores.

Originally I planned eleven books in the Kydd series but I have found the historical record such a rich inspiration for an author that I have since revised that number considerably, upwards. Looks like there will be around 20 in all now.

I am happy to inscribe books for members of the South West Maritime History Society looking for personalised Christmas presents. I have a limited number of Signed First Editions available of some of the earlier titles, too. Further details can be obtained from [admin@julianstockwin.com](mailto:admin@julianstockwin.com) or my website [www.julianstockwin.com](http://www.julianstockwin.com)

## NOTES AND NEWS

Member Sara Stirling has sent us this update

### **Garlandstone and Morwellham Quay**

Morwellham Quay, living history museum and UNESCO World Heritage Site, went into administration in September following the withdrawal of funding from Devon County Council. The site closed at the end of October. The Westcountry Trading Ketch *Garlandstone*, owned by Morwellham Quay, will be sold as part of the site to a charity or organisation that will run the site as a whole and take on the commitments to funding bodies that have invested capital over the last two years. Monthly maintenance on the *Garlandstone* (which was being carried out by Stirling and Son) has now stopped.

### ***Shieldhall* wins award**

*Shieldhall* has been anointed Flagship of the Nations Historic Fleet for 2009 by the National Historic Ships register. – our congratulations to all at the Trust for this acknowledgment of their work in keeping this classic ship steaming.

### **Ministerial Visit to the Purton Hulks**

The Minister for Culture, Media and Sport, Margaret Hodge MBE visited the important Purton site in Gloucestershire on 13 October. Details of Paul's public tour dates are given at the end of the magazine.

## **Trawler restored**

The 52-foot 66 year old wooden sailing trawler *Donna Capel* was originally been built in Belgium in 1942. The Davisons bought it as "pretty much a complete wreck" in 2001 and have spent the past two years restoring her.

The couple faced some negative advice when they first spotted the trawler.

The general opinion was that we should take her up to the top of the yard and set light to her," said Jo.

Undeterred, however, the pair began the re-build at Tregatreath Boatyard in Mylor two years ago.

At first only shipwrights Liz Harris and Mark Cann were involved, but once there was a hull, many other skilled specialists and craftsmen came on board.

"She has had almost completely new frames, topside planking and decks, but we have used the masts, rigging, sails and fittings she already had," said Jo.

"For the final couple of months it was all hands to the pump to get her ready for the big party and everyone pulled out all the stops, for which we are extremely grateful.

"She is looking fantastic and we are hoping to go out for the Tall Ships. There is still fitting out below to be done, which we hope to do over the winter and then use her locally and perhaps get over to France next season."

Looking further ahead, the couple plan to take the *Donna Capel* down to the Mediterranean and John's long-held ambition is to go to Patagonia and the Southern Ocean.

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Source: [ThisPlymouth.co.uk/Plymouth Herald](http://ThisPlymouth.co.uk/PlymouthHerald)

## **New Severn Ferry Service**

Severn Link have announced a new 50 minute ferry service between Ilfracombe and Swansea, starting next summer. Other routes are planned to follow. They will use 40 meter Kvaerner 'FlyingCat' catamarans, capable of running at speeds of up to 34 knots.

Ffi <http://www.severnlink.com/index.php/ferry/>

The first ferry has already arrived

It is good to see a revival in commercial transport in the estuary , although it will lack the charm of *Waverley/Balmoral*. It also offers some intriguing possibilities for meetings.

## ***City Of Adelaide***

The Times 14<sup>th</sup> December reported that the *City of Adelaide* may yet be broken up

## **ORP *Grom***

Martin Hazell reports “ I should have interesting news for members concerning ‘Dive on ORP *Grom* – off Narvik’ both to photograph her and place a plaque on her, down 100 metres deep. I am in contact with the Polish embassy/navy on this and they are very keen! Divers are led by the grandson of a crew member. Its all thanks to ‘Poles Apart’ and our website for the surge in interest here.”

## **New website**

The South West Maritime Archaeological Group has launched a new and well presented website <http://swmag.org/> full of fascinating detail on wrecks and artefacts in the waters around our shores.

## Newport Ship model

A new project called Ship Shape has been launched by the University of Wales, Lampeter, to build a 1:10 replica of the medieval Newport ship, using a variety of high tech processes to accurately and durably model holes and fittings. ( IFA Mag)

[http://news.bbc.co.uk/local/southeastwales/hi/people\\_and\\_places/history/newsid\\_8421000/8421130.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/local/southeastwales/hi/people_and_places/history/newsid_8421000/8421130.stm)



*Source BBC website*

## **Consultation on the future of the *Victory* wreck planned**

[Baroness Taylor](#) has announced that the MOD and DCMS will be jointly undertaking a consultation on the approach to be taken towards the 1744 wreck of the *Victory*.

Baroness Taylor said:

“Following a Royal Navy survey vessel’s survey of the site in July, we will be releasing a detailed analysis of the wreck site. Due to the unique importance of this wreck for naval heritage, the MOD and DCMS will jointly be engaging in a process of consultation on the approaches that should be adopted for this wreck.”

The RN/MOD website states:

“Recognising the Rules to the Annex of the UNESCO Convention on Underwater Cultural Heritage as representing best practice in underwater archaeology, we will be encouraging all of those with an interest in British naval heritage and underwater archaeology to contribute.”

The consultation process will start towards the end of the year. It is understood that the Government’s strategy for the wreck does not currently rule out the recovery of more of the ship’s armament.

A salvage award that is reported to have been \$160,000 has been made in respect of the two guns previously recovered from the site. The warrant for the arrest of the wreck filed in a US court by the American salvage company OME has been dismissed by agreement. OME are reported to be intending to participate in the consultation process and are apparently still claiming that a huge quantity of bullion may have been on board the ship at the time of its loss.

## **Petition reply**

The following is the response to the petition to Downing St. seeking greater protection for historic ships

*The Government's draft Heritage Protection Bill will ensure that where historic ships are permanently fixed in one location, they will, as is currently the case, continue to be eligible for protection. However, they must be deemed to be of sufficient special historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest.*

*Although it was not included in the legislative programme for 2009-10, the Government remains committed to the Bill. It recognises, however, that there are unresolved issues with regard to historic ships, and so will continue to discuss their specific needs with National Historic Ships, the expert committee which advises Government on the preservation of such vessels.*

## **Friends of Purton**

The Friends of Purton are pleased to announce that they have now catalogued its 2007 acquisition of the Graham Farr photographic collection. Thanks are duly made to the late Robin Craig' widow, Yvonne, Michael Farr and Llanelli Photographer Derek Newton Goverd for their generosity, foresight and continued support.

Further details regarding individual images and database searches are available upon request to the Friends of Purton, 22 Gurney Avenue, Tuffley, GL4 0YL or [barnadillo@aol.com](mailto:barnadillo@aol.com).

[www.friendsofpurton.org.uk](http://www.friendsofpurton.org.uk)

## WEBERY

We have received the following response to **Bob Wilson's** letter "Derivation of Spring and Neap Tides" (SW Soundings No.50 Fe

### **Other websites that have been brought to our attention**

South West Maritime Archaeological Group <http://swmag.org/>

Naval Dockyards Society <http://www.navaldockyards.org/>

### **A Selection of Contributions to the Forum**

Non-member Ian Record is trying to trace the history of the VIC35 Clyde Puffer style Victualling Inshore Craft built in 1945, which he now owns.

Non-member Maurice Henegan is an amateur filmmaker and researching the boat building that took place in Salcombe Harbour in the 19th century when activity peaked. He has obtained some general background re builders and boat types, but would like to get some more details of the builders and where the boat yards were located. Sources of black & white photos would be useful.

We have received the following response to **Bob Wilson's** letter "Derivation of Spring and Neap Tides" (SW Soundings No.50 Feb 2001):

"Thank you for explaining the derivation of spring tide. I am teaching translation from German into Arabic at university, and I faced the word Springflut (German), that is spring tide, and I wanted to understand the derivation and to explain it to my students."

SWMHS member **Paul Barnett** has posted the 2010 dates for his Purton Hulks tours. They will take place on Sunday afternoons (see end for dates )

A volunteer at Bewdley museum asks whether we have any information about the barge the *Hannah*, built at Gloucester in 1872. The museum has a rudder, which they believe is from the *Hannah*.

SWMHS member **Colin Green** provided the following information: “She was a 47 ton, open moulded, dandy rigged sloop trow actually built at Framilode, not Gloucester in 1872, probably by Esias Woore. She was boxed and re-rigged as a ketch in 1875. Motorised in 1949. I have photos of her in Gloucester in 1934 as a ketch and in 1949 after motorisation. Picture of her in Avonmouth in 1957”.

SWMHS member **Paul Barnett** added: “What I can say is she is not at Lydney nor Purton but within feet of the Upton on Severn Marina where she was stationed for many years as a house boat”.

**Dave Hills**  
dave.hills@rya-online.net



## UPCOMING EVENTS

*Naval Dockyards Society*

[www.navaldockyards.org](http://www.navaldockyards.org) Contact [ann.coats@port.ac.uk](mailto:ann.coats@port.ac.uk) 02392 863 799

### CALL FOR PAPERS Conference Saturday 17 April 2010 National Maritime Museum Greenwich

Pepys and Chips: Dockyards, Naval Administration & Warfare in the  
17th Century

The seventeenth century saw the development of the royal dockyards into larger, more sophisticated and permanent entities. New dry docks, storehouses and other facilities were built, shipbuilding took place more often and on a larger scale, and the workforce expanded, transforming the dockyards into the largest industrial enterprise in the country. Dockyards were centres of political discontent during the civil wars and became targets during the Anglo-Dutch wars, notably in the Medway attack of 1667. Their administration took up a large part of the working life of Samuel Pepys, whose famous diary commenced 350 years ago.

This conference also commemorates the 350th anniversary of the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660. This brought to the throne Charles II and later his brother James, probably the two British monarchs most interested in, and knowledgeable about, naval matters.

Original papers are invited on any of the themes suggested above.

We do not pay a fee, but you will have free registration and lunch and UK travel expenses paid. Your paper will be published in our *Transactions* (making your paper available for publication is a condition of acceptance) and you will receive free copies.

***Send a synopsis (1 side of A4/300 words) by 31 December 2009 to:  
Dr Ann Coats, Secretary, Naval Dockyards Society, 44, Lindley  
Avenue, Southsea, PO4 9NU, England, 023 9286 3799, email  
ann.coats@port.ac.uk***

THE BRISTOL SHIPLOVER'S SOCIETY  
Programme for 2010

Talks take place at: The Wardroom, HMS Flying Fox, Royal Naval Headquarters, Winterstoke Road Bristol, BS3 2NS.

Talks start at approximately 19:30.

2010 Meeting on the following Tuesdays	
2 <sup>nd</sup> March	RNLI Andrew Young
16 March	Bristol Port Company Patrick Kearon

Membership: Open to all with an interest in ships and the sea.  
VISITORS ARE VERY WELCOME - £3.00 PER HEAD

**Purton dates**

Hope to see you on the bank - Paul

Scheduled site tours

Sunday 17th January 2010 1pm

Sunday 21st February 2010 1pm

Sunday 21st March 2010 1pm

Sunday 18th April 2010 2pm

Sunday 2nd & 16th May 2010 2pm

Sunday 6th & 20th June 2010 2pm

Sunday 4th & 18th July 2010 2pm

Sunday 15th August 2010 2pm

Sunday 5th & 19th September 2010 2pm

Sunday 17th October 2010 2pm

Sunday 21st November 2010 1pm

Sunday 19th December 2010 1pm

## **BRISTOL**

- 29 Jan: Days Gone By/Nostalgia - Capt Danny Lynch
- 26 Feb: Antipodean Adventure – Dave Hunt
- 26 Mar: The Istanbul Scene – David Eeles
- 30 Apr: Cruise around the Baltic – Jim McFaul

## **CORNWALL**

- 8 Jan: Talk from Falmouth pilot – David Barnicoat
- 12 Feb: DVD presentation – David Pollard
- 12 Mar: Branch AGM & video
- 9 Apr: TBA

## **GLOUCESTER**

- 11 Jan: Coastal steamer to North Cape in 1960's – Amy Woolcott
- 8 Feb: Lydney's lost fleet – Paul Barnett
- 8 Mar: Commando Carrier ALBION (in the Borneo campaign) – Neil McCart
- 12 Apr: Manchester Ship Canal – Alan Bailey/Ted Tedaldi

## **PLYMOUTH**

- 12 Jan: 'Digital' Cruising - Ian Denton (*NB Second Tuesday of month*)
- 2 Feb: Thoughts from the Chairman – Peter Kirvell
- 2 Mar: Tilbury 1978 -1987 – Ian Wells (presented by Roland Whaite)
- 6 Apr: Famous Shipwrecks & Disasters – John Avery

## **SWANSEA & WEST WALES**

- 8 Jan: Members' evening , Buffet & Quiz (*NB Second Friday of month*)
- 5 Feb: Ship photos of 1960s and 1970s – Bob Allen
- 5 Mar: A Tug Master's Channel memories – Capt Danny Lynch
- 8 Apr: Nagasaki – Peter Wynne (*NB Second Thursday of month*)

## **TORBAY**

- 12 Jan: TBA
- 9 Feb: A decade at Tilbury – Ian Wells (presented by Roland Whaite)
- 9 Mar: A coastal shipping presentation – Bernard McCall
- 13 Apr: A view from the pilot boat – David Walker
- 24 Apr: Fifth Annual SW Ship Show (*organised by Coastal Shipping Magazine*) –  
Portishead Leisure Centre 10am to 4pm
- 14/15/16 May: 63<sup>rd</sup> Annual General Meeting WSS, Holiday Inn, Ellesmere Port**  
(*organised by Merseyside Branch*) ‘

**SOUTH WEST MARITIME HISTORY SOCIETY**  
**Registered Charity No. 289141**

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