

SOUTH WEST SOUNDINGS 98

The Newsletter of the SOUTH WEST MARITIME HISTORY SOCIETY
ISSN 1360-6980

CONTENTS –NO. 98 – March 2015	1
Guest edited by Ray Fordham	
FUTURE MEETINGS AND OTHER EVENTS	3
EDITORIAL	4
ARTICLES	
<i>The Portuguese Maritime Museum</i> Tim Bass	5
<i>Floating Around...</i> (with Mike Bender)	9
<i>Shipshape and Bristol Fashion</i> Ray Fordham	14
REVIEWS	
<i>The Maritime History of Cornwall</i> rev. Michael Duffy	16
<i>Maritime History of Falmouth</i> rev. David Clement	18
<i>HMS Terror : a Topsham Ship</i> rev. Martin Hazell	19
<i>Even the Cows were Amazed</i> rev. David Clement	20
<i>Dive Truk Lagoon</i> rev. Ness Smith	22
BOOKS RECEIVED	24
LETTERS NOTES AND NEWS	25
OFFICERS and COMMITTEE	back cover

WEBSITE. <http://www.swmaritime.org.uk>
FACEBOOK www.facebook.com/SWMarHistSoc

Individual contributions © Individual contributors.
Entire journal © South West Maritime History Society
2015.

Views expressed are the authors' and not necessarily
those of the Society or editor.

Please note the Society cannot be held responsible for the accuracy
of information on websites and that references in older editions may
not be accurate.

WELCOME ABOARD

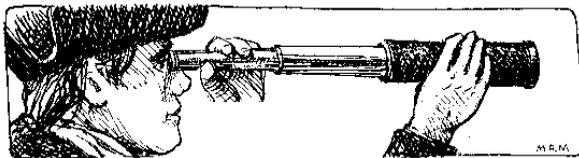
Paul Cooper

Padstow

Nigel Sharp

St Mawes

FUTURE MEETINGS AND OTHER EVENTS



March 12th Scapa Flow and the Italian PoW Chapel. Talk by Andrew Welch RN Retd. At Devonport Naval Heritage Centre.

April 9th Shipwreck History of Plymouth Sound. Talk by Peter Holt. At Devonport Naval Heritage Centre.

April 18th Portishead. SW Ship Show. Society stand.

May 9th South Yard Devonport and Princess Yachts (notice enclosed)

June 6th AGM Topsham (notice enclosed)

In the pipeline:

Day trip on *Kingswear Castle*, River Dart. Date tbc. Ffi Julia Creeke

Underwater archaeology ffi Mike Williams

Autumn meeting, Bristol. Naval shipbuilding

November 8th Taunton or Bridgewater. Maritime History of Somerset

(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 notice for bookings, which will be sent to members at the appropriate time.

Next copy date: 20th April 2015

EDITORIAL

A year ago your editor Jonathan Seagrave asked if any member would be willing to act as guest editor for this current issue of Soundings. In hindsight it was probably unwise of me to offer help as my past editing experience has been largely confined to deciphering hand written manuscripts, reading faint carbon copies of typed ones and wielding the traditional blue pencil. However, there could not have been a very long queue for the job as I was almost immediately sent a comprehensive set of Handover Notes along with thanks and well wishes from the committee. With deadlines looming I am still getting to grips with formats and fonts (why does my computer offer so many options?). At one stage I thought that I would be short of copy and the term press ganging took on an entirely new meaning. I am grateful to the members who sent in contributions and I apologise to any damage I may have caused in re-formatting. Well I am almost there and have only to worry about pdf file conversion, mailing lists and talking to the printer (that is a human in Exeter and not the machine at the end of my desk!).

SWS98 hopefully goes to press in time to beat Royal Mail's latest postal increases which is a fitting reminder that you could be subscribing to this newsletter on-line. Apart from saving postage there are a number of other potential advantages. For example, increased clarity in photos and illustrations. I have reluctantly held back an interesting article by Gary Hicks which involves deciphering handwritten extracts from a ship's log. It is unlikely that the extracts would have been clear enough for interpretation in our normal print but, hopefully, Gary's interesting account will be shortly published with examples of the handwritten entries available on our website.

In the previous newsletter (SWS97) Martin Hazell's Letter from the Chair, outlined the present state of our society. A copy of the calling paper for our AGM at Topsham on 6th June together with an update of Martin's letter is enclosed with your copy of SWS98 Please try to attend this important meeting and participate in discussions on the society's future. If you are unable to attend then you can contact Martin in advance with your views and suggestions. **Ray Fordham**



ARTICLES

The Portuguese Maritime Museum

During a recent holiday it was something of a surprise to discover that Portugal's Maritime Museum in Lisbon was founded as long ago as July 22 1863. When we recall that the British Maritime Museum in Greenwich was eventually opened to the public on 27 April 1937 after a lengthy gestation period of almost ten years one wonders just what could have caused so large a difference. The answer, of course, is that Portugal's navigators had been the first to explore of the oceans of the world. The Portuguese King Luis 1 (reigned 1861-1889), resolved to celebrate the Great Discoveries of 1419-1522 by a royal decree founding a museum "with the goal of building a collection of testimonies related to the Portuguese maritime activity".

The Museum moved to its present site in 1962. A new home was found for it in the vacant west wing of the Monastery of Jeronimos in Belem, a down river suburb of Lisbon from whose harbour the early explorers sailed on their many expeditions. Nearby is the elegant Torre de Belem, built between 1515 and 1518 on an island in the Tagus to defend the river mouth and the monastery. The Tower was made accessible from the north shore after the channel moved following the great earth-quake of 1755. A short distance upstream is the Monument of Discoveries, a modern sculpture erected in 1960 to mark the five hundredth anniversary of the death of Prince Henry the Navigator. He had been born in 1398.

After sailing on two voyages led by his father King Joao 1, which had resulted in the Portuguese gaining control of the Straits of Gibraltar, Henry retired to the Sagres peninsula in the far south-west of the country. Here he began to study the available charts and to question experienced navigators and cartographers to try to find a new sea route to India. At that time the valuable East-West trade, which moved both by land and sea, was monopolised by Moors and Venetians. By 1427 Henry's captains had discovered Madeira and the Azores. In 1434 Gil Eanes found a passable route around Cape Bojador, the headland north of the 'bulge' of Africa. Adverse winds and unfavourable tidal streams in these waters were overcome by the development of the oceangoing caravel with its improved windward sailing ability.

Discoveries now came more speedily. Diego Cao found the mouth of the Congo in 1482 and a few years later, in 1488, Bartolomew Dias reached the Cape of Good Hope. This discovery led to Vasco da Gama's epic voyage to India. He sailed with four square-rigged ships on 8 July 1497 and arrived in Calicut on the south-west coast of India on 20 May 1498. By 1515 Goa, midway between Calicut and Mumbai (Bombay), had become the capital of Portuguese India. It remained so until the territories were forcibly annexed by India in 1961.

Pedro Cabral's voyage to Brazil in 1500 was perhaps the high-point of the Age of Discoveries. Brazil soon became an important Portuguese colony and, indeed, was used as a refuge by the Royal Family after the French invasion of 1808. It must be remembered too that Ferdinand Magellan was Portuguese although he departed on his circumnavigation in 1519 on behalf of the King of Spain. Magellan himself was killed by natives in the Philippines but one of his ships returned home to Spain via the Cape of Good Hope after a three year voyage.

The Museum is entered through the large gallery devoted to the Discoveries. These are explained to the visitor by means of paintings, portraits, ship models, replicas of charts, navigational instruments, weapons and so on. Excellent models of Vasco da Gama's ships, made in the Museum's workshops in the 1970s, can be found here. The

model-makers worked under the directions of a number of senior naval officers with long term interests in and experience of their country's maritime history. Unfortunately, there is as yet little archaeological evidence of ships from the days of the explorations. A fine walnut chest is exhibited, decorated with da Gama's badge. It has been shown by radiocarbon dating to have been made from a tree felled in the fifteenth century. It is believed to have been aboard his flagship during the voyage to India. Also in this gallery are a number of wrought iron and bronze breech loading cannons dating from the sixteenth century. Few such weapons figure in the chronologically later British collections where the predominant weapon is the cast iron or bronze muzzle loader.

In 1948 the Museum's collection was greatly enhanced by the immensely generous donation of Henrique Maufroy de Sexias. A wealthy man with lifelong maritime interests, de Sexias had built up a private museum within his own home, employing skilled modelers to draw up plans of nineteenth and twentieth century Portuguese warships, river boats and deep-sea and inshore fishing craft from the mainland and islands. Models of the vessels and craft were subsequently built. His collection also included a number of paintings and photographs. The latter comprise some 20,000 glass plates, a resource of great value to future researchers.

Lastly the visitor leaves the galleries within the Monastery and, after passing through a roofed open area where a few inshore boats are exhibited, enters a large modern space, the "Galliot's Pavilion". It has a suspended roof with few visible means of support. To protect the valuable contents from direct sunlight only the north facing wall is glazed. The prize exhibit is the "Royal Brigantine", a 29 metre royal barge. She was built in 1784 for the marriage of the Crown Prince, the future King Joao VI. She was propelled by forty oars and is superbly decorated with much gilded carving. She was last used for the State Visit of Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip in 1957. Several more smaller royal barges are nearby.

Modern exhibits in the Pavilion include three naval aircraft, one of which, a Fairey IIID float seaplane imported from Britain, completed

the first air crossing of the South Atlantic in 1922. Also to be seen is the Snipe racing dinghy (a well known American design) which won the 1953 World Championship in Monaco. She was sailed by two young Portuguese men.

The Museum is easily reached by public transport from the city centre. Frequent trains run to Belem from the Cais de Sodre station. It is also served by tram number 15. To do justice to this wonderful museum a visit of at least four hours is desirable.

Tim Bass



Royal Barge, Maritime Museum, Lisbon (Photo R. Fordham Oct 2014)

Floating Around...(with Mike Bender)

Cardiff

After the Swansea meet, I headed to Cardiff to check out ‘World of Boats’. Cardiff must be one of the worst sign-posted cities in the UK. The National Museum of Wales has the most impressive collection of Impressionists in the UK- thanks to the bequests of Margaret and Gwendoline Davies, grandchildren of David Davies, who, among other entrepreneurial acts, built Barry Docks (*What Two Sisters Did for Wales*, National Museum of Wales, 2007) yet the National Museum has not a single sign to help you find it. I knew I had to follow the signs to Cardiff Bay but there weren’t any. Anyway, after a tour of the city, I eventually got to the ‘Doctor Who Experience’ – don’t know what that’s got to do with Cardiff or Wales – and there are the sheds of the World of Boats.

It was stepping back in time, because most of the exhibits are from the defunct Exeter Maritime Museum. As I wandered around, I found Andrew Thornhill who took the collection over from Major David Goddard, an ex-marine officer. As negotiations with Exeter City Council became fraught, Thornhill advised caution, whereupon Goddard growled: ‘Fire the mortar first and talk later’.

The café has a veranda with a great view of the bay. It’s licensed and open till 9.30, almost every day of the year which is handy (Check on 07971 055 811). And if you arrive after the exhibition space is closed, you can ask them to open it up for you. Very civilised- and it only costs a fiver to get in. Thornhill hopes to expand both on land and outside along the quay. So watch this space.

After the shambles of trying to negotiate Cardiff, I had invested in a satnav which, driving north, brought us sweetly to Preston Marina, which is located on the inner harbour – the old Preston Dock. There’s no commercial traffic now and hasn’t been for decades, but in its heyday, Preston’s city fathers wanted it to become a major west coast port, and invested in a 14 mile training wall by the Ribble till it reached the Irish sea. It was finished in 1910. Being so far from the sea, the marina is strangely a winter marina – people leave their boats there or work on

them in the winter.

One odd feature is a lighthouse upstream of the harbour, which of course, did not need a lighthouse, just lights on the lock gates so that you didn't keep going up the Ribble, which swings away to starboard. This lighthouse must be one of the very few examples of humour shown by Morrisons, for it is a fake in the carpark of its store.

24 October

Heading West to the Yealm, I passed the Ham Stone and Soar Mill Cove, where the *Herzogin Cecile*, which, on passage from Falmouth to Ipswich with Australian grain, 25 April, 1936, ran aground. This is some eight miles west of Start Point, which of course it needed to round. It is said that drink had been taken by the officers, for on a foggy night, you would have thought they would have added a few degrees south for safety.

But the incompetence of the officers or not, what occurred to me was what the *Herzogin Cecilie* doing anywhere near Salcombe? After all, she was bound for Ipswich with a following wind. She surely would not have tried to go inside the Isle of Wight with all its steamer traffic, so she had to clear St Katherine's. A course much further South and free of all land-based dangers till the Isle of Wight. Perhaps a reader knows the answer.

Bookshops

A couple of issues ago David Clements talked about bookshops. You might like to look at Book Exchange, West Street Exeter. It's part of Book Cycle, hence the cycle outside and you can swop 3 books for 3 of theirs for free- and the books aren't tatt. Quite a good maritime section, in fact.

February 2015

All the talk of last year's storms reminds me that soon after them, I was walking the dogs down to Challaborough beach, when I saw three serious types – not the usual caravan users - examining a bit of the

rather demolished little cliff at the back of the beach. Curious, I wandered over and found they were quite a high powered bunch –the head of Devon Archeology or some such title and a member of Bournemouth University Archeology Dept., which has a high profile reputation. It might have been Dr.Eileen Wilkes, for her website says that she leads the dig of the Iron Age/ Roman-British Settlement up on Folly Hill, Bigbury-on-Sea, or one of her colleagues. They were looking a rather small section of wall...It seems Sedgwell beach is no good - too open ?- so Challaborough could have been where the Romans landed to supply the fort. Not sure what was left after a few more days of storms. There was an amusing coda to my inquiries. There was a large piece of stonework next to the rather small Roman effort. ‘What’s that?’ I asked. With barely a glance, ‘oh, that’s the fellow in the bungalow ’s garden wall’.

The decline of yachting

In my forthcoming (this year I hope) article in *Southwest Maritime*, I muse on the future of yachting, but couldn’t find any data. Since then, I found that *Yachting Monthly*, August 2013, pp.10-12, reports on a survey by an ongoing market research company called Arkenford. From 2002 to 2012, numbers yacht cruising have gone down from 433k to 328k; yacht racing from 153k to 106k; small sailboat from 606k to 388k; and our dinghy friends have shrunk from 333k to 165k .

Yacht racing is, I suspect, very much influenced by the Solent, which is its own culture, so outside the Solent, the decline in yacht racing must be much more serious. Among the small boats, the decline is nearly 50%.

Cruising is the least affected, and the commentators on p. 12 say not to worry – the baby boomers will keep us all afloat – the newly retireds will keep sailing going. I have my doubts. Firstly, people with an emotional attachment to the sea – be it by sailing on it, or watching it-witness the success of National Coast Watch in recruiting volunteers, or studying it – are of a particular cohort, which is now passing. Secondly, specifically, with regard to sailing, the optimism is ill-founded. The old have to subsidise the young to do internships, afford children or just pay

the rent. And it's not just the lending of money. More crucial to yachting, is the lending of time, so that they can satisfy the dictatorship of present work conditions, while the grandparents look after the family. So they, the grandparents, haven't the time to sail.

Synchrony- the loss of the Open Golf Championship by the BBC has led to lots of breast beating. But Richard Williams in the *Guardian* 7/2/2015, p.11, points out, 'the statistics in Europe and the United States show a steady drop-off in the numbers of those playing a game whose years of peak popularity appear to have passed. The phenomenon is particularly marked among younger people: in the 16-25 age group, numbers are down by almost a quarter in the past year alone...' My guess is that all the Victorian prestige sports – so add foxhunting, shooting, mountain climbing – are suffering from England rapidly becoming a money- and time-poor banana republic of the multinationals; and the poor, out-of-date 'stuffy' image of the sport (in the case of yachting, ludicrous etiquette, in golf, no jeans allowed at the bar etc. etc.)

Salcombe

One evening in June, I was at a mooring in the Bag and I dinghied Seadog2 ashore and we walked along the shore towards Lincombe. Rounding a corner, I found a man building a fire whom I initially take to be a latter-day Robinson Crusoe, but he was in fact the advanced guard from Island Cruising Club and their students. He told me that it would cost £400,000 to get *Egremont* down to Penzance and a fitness certificate, £800,000 to do necessary repairs. *Egremont* is unique, he says, as it's the last example of a boat put together with rivets (I think). She was built by Phillips and Son, Dartmouth in 1951 to work as a Mersey ferry, and came to Salcombe in 1975. When I get home, I googled but could find no info.

From the cabin shelf

John Corin wrote a pamphlet (*Our Island Story*), now available on the net, and its founder Baylay an autobiographical account (*When the Bug Bites*). Even so, there is more to be written by an informed maritime

historian about this club, and its self-help philosophy; and its courses being the basis for the first RYA training requirements. Baylay disliked 'the welfare state' – he had the self-made man's dislike of 'scroungers' etc. but in fact, I.C.C. was completely in tune with the times of working together for a better future. You didn't just pay for your week; you became a member of the club, which entitled you to that week. I'm reminded by getting hold of 'The trouble with Des' – reprints of his short articles in *Classic Boat* (Read him in short bursts as his hyperbolic style is repetitive; but he is the only sailing humourist that can make you/me laugh out loud). Sleightholme was skipper of the I.C.C.'s Edwardian yacht, *Hoshi*, and to make more space for punters, he and his wife, Joyce, slept in the sail locker.

Feb, 2012. I.C.C. went into receivership just before Christmas. It had a reasonably flourishing dinghy training school, but clearly, if there is no accommodation aboard, the dinghy school could not survive, since b&b accommodation is scarce in Salcombe in summer and very expensive. Then I hear that the all the boats- dinghies, launches- have been sold, so clearly there is no hope of I.C.C. continuing. But I can't understand why no appeal was launched in such a prosperous yachting centre; and indeed, why the appeal wasn't launched years ago - that *Egremont* had to be replaced was surely obvious.

How long will the harbourmaster tolerate a vessel that is at risk of sinking on her mooring? A very sad end to an important part of yachting history. If you want to say Goodbye to her, after May, you can take the Kingsbridge-Salcombe ferry. In the meantime, take the Kingsbridge-Salcombe road past Malborough for a mile, and take a left signposted Lincombe. Follow the road down and round, till just before the final descent to the boatyard, you see a sign for Snapes Point and the National Trust carpark. Watching where you put your feet- it's a favourite dog walking area for Salcombers – walk along the path towards the Bag and you'll see her across the water.

Mike Bender

Shipshape and Bristol Fashion

The expression “shipshape and Bristol fashion” has been attributed to the years prior to the construction of the port's floating harbour in 1809 when the large tidal range necessitated careful mooring and on-board stowage by visiting ships. There have been many changes to the harbour in the past 200 years but, as I can testify from a recent visit, it still remains very much shipshape.

On a very cold morning in January my wife and I left a warm hotel room overlooking Prince's Wharf and bought a day ticket on one of the Bristol Ferry Boats which allowed us to take our time and explore the various stops around the harbour. The ferry's first mate was a fast speaking young Irish lady with a detailed knowledge of the past history and rumoured future movements of every craft in the harbour. There was something for all tastes.

A visit to the *SS Great Britain* is always a must; I first saw her in 1970 when she returned to Bristol and continue to marvel at the restoration that has been achieved during the passing years. She is once more in the news with the death of Sir Jack Hayward, the benefactor who made her final return to Bristol from the Falkland Islands possible. It has also been reported that archaeologists from Bristol University, using advanced geophysical techniques, have located the exact site in Dundrum Bay, Northern Ireland, where *SS Great Britain* was grounded for almost a year as a result of a navigational error in 1846. The team hope to recover artefacts thrown overboard during the salvage operation.

Another eye-catching sight at the time of our visit was the three masted barque *Kaskelot*, originally a traditional Baltic Trader but better known as a film star based at Charlestown in Cornwall. She has recently undergone a major refit and is available for charter. Let's hope she remains in the South West. According to Plymouth's Sutton Harbour *Kaskelot* will be moored there from April 2-12. *MV Balmoral*, also alongside the harbour was to receive good news the week following our visit; she had been awarded £334,000 phased over two years, by the Coastal Communities Fund (CCF) for urgent restoration work.

One of the disadvantages of a floating harbour is that you rarely get to see the underside of ships. By chance, our visit coincided with the *Matthew's* annual haul-out so we were able to appreciate the ship's lines. If one ignores the twin propellers, her hull is a work of art. It prompted me to read Colin Mudie's account of this 1997 reconstruction of a 1497 ship.

Happily, wooden boat building is still alive in Bristol. Tim Loftus was working in his boat shed in the Underfall Yard alongside the recently launched *Niarbyl* and *Leaf*. The *Leaf* has been nominated in Classic Boat magazine for the annual award in the Best Traditional New Build Category. She is a 5 tonne, 25 ft (7.6m) junk-rigged sloop and, as befits her name, is a bright green colour which may not be to everyone's taste. Voting still continues; the winner to be announced around May. Good luck Tim.

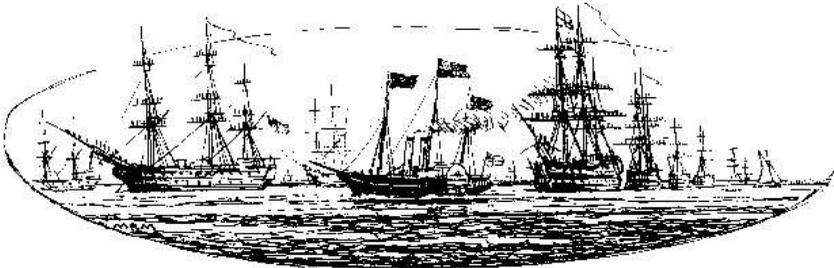
Having helped restore the *Happy Return* built in Porthleven in 1904, I have a special love of Cornish luggers. It was therefore a pleasure to see the *Peel Castle*, built in Porthleven in 1929, lying alongside close to our hotel. She appeared in great shape although, with three masts looks less traditional than *Happy Return*.

Following Mike Bender's scholarly article on Arthur Ransome in Maritime South West 27, 137-172 I feel no longer embarrassed to declare that I am a life long fan of Ransome's books. Swallows and Amazons, the musical, was taking place at Bristol's Old Vic and we joined a very happy audience for its penultimate performance. Not as good as the book (how could it be?) but it captured the spirit of the subject and time. How often can you fill a theatre with both youngsters and pensioners not attending in the role of grand parents?

To complete our maritime city break we just had to have dinner afloat and where better than the *Glassboat*. Originally a steel barge named *Yew Mead* employed in timber haulage, it could have disappeared in the Severn Estuary mud. However, following its recovery by a Swedish botanist Arne Ringet who intended to convert it into a floating botanical garden, it evolved into a great restaurant. As a water craft it's nothing great to look at but as a place to eat it is fantastic.

I know that Bristol has been the venue for previous SWMHS meetings but I commend it for future occasions. I for one intend to return.

Ray Fordham



REVIEWS

The Maritime History of Cornwall, edited by Philip Payton, Alston Kennerley and Helen Doe, foreward by HRH The Duke of Cornwall. ISBN 978-085989850-8. Published by University of Exeter Press, 2014, xiv + 461 pages. Price £65.

This is an important and very well produced book, profusely illustrated, including 28 colour plates, and with abundant maps, prints, photographs, tables and figures. The editors rightly point out that, unlike the editors of *The New Maritime History of Devon*, they had no previous Cornish maritime history to build upon and they have taken pains to set the chapters of their work in context with five substantial, informative, wide-ranging introductions to the volume's component parts on early and medieval Cornwall, Tudor and Stuart Cornwall, Cornwall in the Eighteenth Century, Cornwall in the Nineteenth Century, and Twentieth to Twenty First Century Cornwall. These indeed have been the key to making the volume work so well. As is to be expected there is more surviving information and hence more chapters in the later parts, but all have articles written by many well-known senior experts as well as some younger rising stars in their subjects. It is to be regretted that the long and difficult twenty-year gestation of

the volume has meant that some of them have not lived to see it in print, but the editors have triumphantly salvaged what has several times been a sinking craft and brought the vessel with its rich merchandise to port.

The object has been to show the all-pervasive influence of the sea on the lives, culture, economy and society of the Cornish people and the impact of its geographic position and its alternate stormy and sunny coasts on those passing by or through the county. The story is not short of wreck, rescue and recreation, but it is also not short of fishing, trade and war, of innovation and exploitation – the range is vast. The editors openly avow that, in keeping with modern interpretations of maritime history, they have opted for the widest breadth of approach, and this works – indeed it whets the appetite for more. In a book covering such an extensive subject over such an extensive period there is always something readers with particular specialised interests might wish more of, but the editors have thoughtfully provided a wealth of notes and reading lists for the eager reader to pursue further.

There will undoubtedly be those who will draw breath at the price of this volume, but this is a quality production and a mine of knowledge presented in a readable and easily accessible way that those with an interest in the maritime history of the South West cannot afford to be without. As one of five who edited the *New Maritime History of Devon* and still remembers the labours that went into its publication, this reviewer is full of admiration for what Helen Doe, Alston Kennerley and Philip Payton have achieved. Together with the *Maritime History of Somerset*, which Adrian Webb is guiding to its third volume, the South West can now boast by far the most comprehensive maritime historical coverage of any British region.

Michael Duffy

Maritime History of Falmouth: The Port, its Shipping and Pilotage Service

By D.G. Wilson.

Published by Halsgrove, Ryelands Business Park, Bagley Rd.,
Wellington TA21 9PZ at cost of £19.99

Hardback, 210mm x 295mm, 160 pages, with 82 black & white
illustrations

ISBN 13.9780857042231

This is a superbly produced and written book in a class of its own, and clearly the product of most detailed research and examination of original documents, and is a volume that should be on the shelves of anyone interested in the West Country. The detailed coverage of the local pilot boats is unsurpassed.

In 8 chapters we are taken from the earliest origins of Falmouth and its development as a harbour for the World's shipping and the growth of maritime trade. After detailing the hazards when sailing past the approaches to Falmouth and the Lizard we have 4 chapters covering the pilots and the services provided, followed by 4 appendices, the last of which covers in detail the shipyards of the River Fal.

The coverage of the Falmouth pilot service is the most complete I have seen, touched upon in the earlier 4 chapters but detailing the pilots, the losses, and the growth and popularity of Pilot Regattas, followed by a schedule of the vessels themselves. The appendices cover the building and fitting out costs of the Arrow; a schedule of the pilotage income earned annually from 1860 to 1900; and the Falmouth Pilotage Rates and Harbour dues in 1846. I was surprised to find some 81 boat builders listed on the river Fal and its tributaries in Appendix 4.

This is but a brief overview which by no means does justice to the in-depth information found within this book. It is a volume that is hard to put down and I have read from cover to cover.

We learn of the rise and collapse of the sailing trades and as a port of for 'orders' and the supportive services supplied to vessels by various

contractors, including the Fox family who are still trading today. Closely associated with the shipping trades followed the development of Falmouth as a town, which is also covered in detail. Altogether a remarkable and excellent book.

Halsgrove and the author David Wilson, a member of South West Maritime History Society, are to be congratulated in producing such an exceptional and well laid out book, and at a very reasonable price for a hardback of this quality. David's earlier book *Falmouth Haven* (2007) is still available as a paperback from Tempus Publishing, or Book Depository for £16.58

David. B. Clement

HMS Terror : a Topsham Ship - pub. by Topsham Museum Soc. - 2014 [24 pages, Paperback, illustrated] Price:£2.50p

This is the 14th. book published by this very active local history Society, and our founder member and current publications editor David Clement is one of the main contributors to this booklet. (After the Society AGM on June 7th. 2014 a number of members visited Topsham Museum to view the fine model of *HMS Terror* there.)

Based upon secondary and internet material the story of the Davy shipyard built 'bomb' vessel *HMS Terror* is clearly told. One little known fact is that RN bomb vessels including '*Terror*' pounded the US defences at Baltimore during the War of 1812. The US defenders stood firm and the resulting song, 'Star Spangled Banner' which became the American national anthem referred to this event.

With the coming of peace in Europe and America the massive timbers used in constructing these specialist vessels proved, with periodic updating and modification, ideal for Polar exploration. Ultimately watertight bulkheads and eventually steam power prolonged the active life of '*Terror*'. She sailed in Arctic waters (1836-37) returning to the UK much battered by pack ice. Repaired and strengthened she then sailed under the overall command of Captain Ross in *HMS Erebus* to the

Antarctic (1839 – 1843). Many regard this voyage as the greatest scientific achievement of the sailing navy.

The 1845 expedition to the Arctic, under Sir John Franklin, to seek the North West Passage, culminated in tragedy with the loss of ‘*Erebus*’ and ‘*Terror*’ and all their crews. Many expeditions were sent out to find out what had happened. The search for the fate of Franklin and his men became headline news. The search for the fate of Franklin and his men became headline news. The story still continues to this day, for this year [2014] in 11 metres of water off King William Sound it seems that modern science has finally located the wreck of either ‘*Terror*’ or ‘*Erebus*’.

Thus it is that a Topsham built ship has links to the history of both the USA and Canada. This is just the book to pick up when you visit the Topsham museum, as an easy adventure read for all the family!

Martin Hazell

(You can see a print of Peter Foston's evocative painting of HMS Terror on the inside cover of SWS97. It has now been confirmed that the recently discovered wreck is that of HMS Erebus. Editor)

Even the Cows were Amazed: Shipwreck survivors in South East Africa 1552-1782

By Gillian Vernon

Published by Jacana Media (PTY) Ltd. (www.jacana.co.za)

Cost £15.77 (Amazon and Book Depository)

Softback 170mm x 245mm, 176 pages, with 68 illustrations, mostly in colour, and 10 maps.

This absorbing book is a well illustrated examination of the earliest recorded wrecks and the fate of the survivors on the coasts of what is now South Africa and Mozambique from 1552. The author has examined the writings of the events and detailed the survivors privations and inter-action with the local inhabitants, and draws a fascinating picture of some of the earliest recorded incidents, which required unimaginable treks for very long distances where survivors – both male

and female – needed to rely upon the generosity of the local population for their succour and very survival.

The author Gillian Vernon was formerly director of the East London Museum, South Africa, and has penned a detailed account of a number of wrecks of European vessels, from primarily Portugal and England which traded to India and from which there were survivors.

The attitudes of the crews and their empathy, or otherwise, with the local population resulted in very different outcomes. The book is divided into 14 Chapters and opens with a brief outline of European trade to the East and the dangerous south-eastern coastline, which was still entrapping sailing vessels to the end of their final days in the early 20th Century. We examine the ships Sao Joao 1552, Sao Bento 1554, Sao Tomé 1589, Santo Alberto 1593, Sao Joao Baptista 1622, Sao Gonçalo 1630, N S de Belém 1635, Santissimo Sacramento 1642, N S de Atalaia 1647, Stavenisse 1686, Bennebroeck 1713, Doddington 1755, and the Grosvenor 1782. In six of these cases a written record was left detailing the length of the walk to rescue and the privations suffered by the survivors. This is also a fascinating look at the development and life of the local population some 500 years ago, and the author has carefully analysed this aspect to produce an excellent overview of perhaps the earliest recorded data on the subject.

The book is beautifully illustrated, generally in colour with some of the recovered artefacts, and the maps are detailed showing the progress and the distances travelled. This is an unusual subject but one I would recommend to all. It can be obtained through Amazon and Book Depository, rather than applying to South Africa.

David. B. Clement

Dive Truk Lagoon: The Japanese WWII Pacific Shipwrecks

by Rod Macdonald

ISBN 978-1-84995-131-9

This compact book arrived on my desk to review just two weeks before my trip to Truk (Chuuk) Lagoon to dive the famous Japanese WWII wrecks. Operation Hailstone was launched by combined US forces in the early hours of 17th February 1944; its objective to destroy Japanese airfields and aircraft, followed by the ships at anchor below. Having spotted a US Navy reconnaissance aircraft two weeks before, Japanese commanders, suspecting a strike might be imminent, had ordered many of the heavy Imperial Japanese Navy warships to leave the Lagoon. Once air superiority was established, the subsequent attack was therefore concentrated on destroying whatever vessels were left in the lagoon which included smaller warships, destroyers, light cruisers and a mass of naval auxiliaries loaded with war supplies. Altogether 45 ships were sunk, a further 27 damaged, and 275 aircraft destroyed. In comparison, the US lost only 25 aircraft, 29 aircrew and 11 sailors. The result is one of the greatest concentrations of shipwrecks in the world, an iconic destination for divers for decades.

The book is divided into two chapters - a brief history of Operation Hailstone, followed by detailed descriptions of the most frequently dived shipwrecks and aircraft wrecks within the Lagoon. If you are looking for an in-depth analysis of the campaign, then you would probably be better off with one of Dan E Bailey's or Klaus Lindemann's weighty tomes, but Rod Macdonald's book gave me more than enough background to understand the wrecks in context and an appetite to find out more.

A full colour map at the start of the shipwreck section neatly shows the location of the described wrecks, but I would have liked a page number on the key so that I could easily skip to the appropriate wreck. For each wreck there is a description of its build, service history, and the events leading up to its sinking. A section on 'the wreck today' describes how it lies in the water, its condition and dive highlights, along with Rod's

characteristic artworks of the larger wrecks. A final 'essentials' section provides a useful summary and opportunity to check your dive depths.

The book has a few disappointments. The photography is generally poor (my fellow divers produced some absolutely stunning images on our trip), and the artworks, although beautiful, are sometimes not an accurate reflection of the wreck's current condition. There is also a lack of information about the experience, skills and equipment needed to dive somewhere as remote as Truk Lagoon, whilst the dry writing style does not reflect the sheer joy of diving on these truly awe-inspiring wrecks.

However, there are many positives. Unlike other books on Truk, this one is small and light enough to pack; an important consideration when weight-allowance is so precious! The wreck descriptions provided more than enough information to give me a good idea of what I could expect to find, and I could easily dip in and out of the book in between dives which was a useful way to reflect on what I had just seen. Overall, this is a very good book for someone who is new to the subject and would like a general guide to enhance their dive experience in Truk. I would highly recommend it.

Ness Smith

BOOKS RECEIVED

Sail and Steam in the Plymouth district by Alan Kittridge

We have received a press release on the above new book to be published on 27 March when the author will be signing copies at the Book Shop, Market Street, Tavistock from 11am.

Published by Twelveheads Press, Truro. 156 pages, 146 illustrations
Price £16.50.

LETTERS NOTES AND NEWS

The lateen sail – an enquiry

A Merseyside correspondent has asked whether I know why it took so long for the lateen sail to be adopted in Mediterranean and Atlantic sail plans.

After scrutinising histories, from which I see that the triangular sail is presumed to have originated in Arabian Sea ships, that such sails were first seen in Mediterranean ships around 800 AD, but that they were not the principle form of motive power in Atlantic ships except for small vessels such as 15-16th century Portuguese caravels and mid-19th century Dutch fishing schooners, the only answer I can confidently give is “No; I don’t know”.

Can any reader enlighten me?

David Jenkinson

Funding News

The North Devon Council have been unsuccessful in their bid for a M£2 grant from the Coastal Communities Fund (CCF) for the building of a replica of the *Prudence of Barnstaple*. The *Prudence* was an Elizabethan ship owned by Richard Dodderidge, the mayor of Barnstaple, and local merchants. In 1590, following a privateering voyage, she returned to Barnstaple with an immense treasure including four cases of gold then valued at £16,000. The Council intend to seek alternative funding to build the proposed replica which they consider would be a major tourist attraction.

Better news for *MV Balmoral* which secured a grant of £344,000, to be phased over two years, from the CCF. We look forward to seeing the *Balmoral* sailing again later this year.

Little Ships to gather on Thames for Dunkirk Anniversary in May. The fleet, expected to number more than 50 vessels, will sail to Dunkirk on May 21. It should be quite a sight! Are any going from the South West?

PS Kingswear Castle Trust has acquired machinery from her sister ship *PS Compton Castle* which languishes landlocked in Truro where it served for a while as a florist shop and cafe.

The Grayhound, a replica of an 18th Century three masted customs' lugger, is the first British registered vessel to provide a regular cross channel cargo delivery service under sail.

Bessie Ellen and *Irene*, “the last of the West Country trading ketches” will be sailing together this year.

North Devon Maritime Museum reopens 1st April with new exhibits prepared by Mike Guegan and Barry Hughes on local Q ships and craft produced in Appledore by P K Harris and Blackmore for service in the 2nd World War. These include Minesweepers, Motor Torpedo Boats etc. For links to a more peaceful era, the museum continues work on restoring the Picarooner.

The Mount's Bay Lugger *Happy Return*, built in Porthleven in 1904, is finalising her sailing plans for 2015. She will be taking part in the Looe Lugger Regatta 18-21 June along with other classic sailing vessels from the south west.



The Society regrets to record the deaths of

John B Redfearn

and

David Hills

We are the poorer for their passing.

(A tribute to David Hills from the SWMHS Committee appeared in SWS97)

SOUTH WEST MARITIME HISTORY SOCIETY
Registered Charity No. 289141
(Updated 15.11.14)

Chairman	Martin Hazell 124 Molesworth Road Stoke Plymouth Devon PL3 4AH Tel. 07941 603097 /01752 550768 Email: chair@swmaritime.org.uk
Vice chair /Editor S.W. Soundings	Jonathan Seagrave 10 Woodlands Rise, Downend Bristol BS16 2RX Tel: 0117 9566127 Email: soundings@swmaritime.org.uk
Editor Maritime S.W & Monographs	David Clement The Holt, Exton, Exeter, Devon EX3 0PN Tel. 01392 875604. E-mail: journal@swmaritime.org.uk
Acting Secretary	Martin Hazell Email secretary@swmaritime.org.uk
Treasurer	Derek Tyrrell 113 Parson Street Bedminster BS3 5QH Tel: 0117 907 7373 Email: treasurer@swmaritime.org.uk
Membership/Asst treasurer (new/renewals/changes)	Gillian Seagrave 10 Woodlands Rise, Downend Bristol BS16 2RX (Tel: 0117 9566127 : note email/post preferred) Email: membership@swmaritime.org.uk
Facebook /twitter	Sarah Parsons s.parsons.m@gmail.com

COMMITTEE

Mike Bender, Julia Creeke, Michael Duffy, Maria Fusaro, Peter
Ferguson, Mike Williams, Peter Skidmore.