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MARITIME HERITAGE ASSOCIATION JOURNAL



Jolly-Boat's Crew Soliciting to be Received into the Long Boat
From a sketch by Lieutenant Weston

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Annual General Meeting

When: 11.30am, Sunday 7 April 2024

Where: Heritage Room, South of Perth Yacht Club

At 12.30 following the meeting, MHA members are invited to adjourn to the Quarterdeck Restaurant at the club and book their lunch and refreshments at the bar



We are looking forward to meeting many of our friends at this social event.



End of Year Windup

Photos by
David Nicolson, Elly
Spillekom & Peter
Worsley





The Ditty Bag

An occasional collection of nautical trivia to inform, astound, amuse and inspire.

(The inspiration could take the form of contributions to this page!)

HMS *Victory* is undergoing a 12-year long restoration which will cost £35 million sterling. All the topside planks from the waterline up will be replaced. This amounts to 800 oak planks, the largest 11in thick and 16in wide. The time of 12 years is twice as long as the time taken to build the ship (1759–1765), and that included three years when no building took place.

Stud link chain was introduced in 1813 by Thomas Brunton of London. Initially the studs were to prevent the chain kinking, and it was known as Mr Brunton's chain. The studs also prevented the sides of the links collapsing inwards under strain.

The inventor of the modern diving helmet and suit was Augustus Siebe (1788–1872). His two sons set up the business, Siebe, Gorman and Company Ltd, which remained until 1999 when it amalgamated.

When James Cook's *Endeavour* left Britain in 1768 the victuals on board included 11,500 litres of wine, 6,000 litres of spirits and 4,500 litres of beer. This was for a crew of 94, the youngest, Isaac George Manley, only 12 years of age

On 29 September 1913 Rudolf Diesel, the German inventor of the diesel engine, disappeared from the steamer S.S. *Dresden* on the way from Antwerp to London. He retired to his cabin at about 10 p.m. but was never seen alive again. Ten days later, a corpse was found in the North Sea near Norway, but only personal items could be retrieved. On 13 October, these items were identified by Rudolf's son Eugen as belonging to his father.

The 56½ft yacht *Islander* was designed by G.L. Watson and launched in 1937. During a refit in 2008 about 20% of the oak frames needed replacing. While carrying out these repairs a piece of lead was found in one of the old frames, and this proved to be a ball from a Brown Bess musket. This was a common firearm used in the British Army from 1722 to 1862. During that time it must have been fired and the ball had ended in the oak, later cut down in 1937 to build the *Islander*.

In January 1871 John Septimus Roe, aged 73 years and 3 months, asked the Governor if he could retire as he had served 57 years and 2 months in the

public service of which 41 years and 7½ months had been as Surveyor-General.

In September 1820 Phillip Parker King named a peaked hill in the Kimberleys Donkin's Hill *after the inventor of the preserved meat; upon a canister of which our party dined.*

The first underwater circumnavigation of the world was by the nuclear submarine *USS Triton* under the command of Captain Edward L. Beach. The voyage, code-named Operation Sandblast, took 60 days and 21 hours from 24 February to 25 April 1960, and covered 26,723 nautical miles.

Pinch-gut money: An expression used by merchant seamen for money paid to them, in certain vessels, at the end of a voyage, to the value of such stores as they were entitled to but had not drawn.

The following animals were on board the S.S. *Great Britain* to feed First Class passengers during one voyage from Britain to Australia in 1864: 1 cow, 3 bullocks, 150 sheep, 30 pigs, 500 chickens, 400 ducks, 100 geese, 50 turkeys, and there were two butchers to deal with them prior to the cooks making them edible.

Trypots were called boilers by English whalers, and the boiling oil was, understandably, called 'the stink'. On the other hand it was American whalers' practice to celebrate the 1,000th barrel of the voyage by frying donuts in the oil.

One of the earliest descriptions of an Australasian mammal, a pademelon or medium sized wallaby:

In the shape of a dog smaller than a greyhound, with a bare and scaly tale like that of a snake, and his testicles hang from a nerve like a thin cord; they say that it was a castor [referring to a beaver], we ate it and it was like venison.

Don Diego de Prado y Tovar, 1606

By tradition in a steamer they are called the First Officer and Second Officer, in a sailing ship they are the Mate and Second Mate.





QUIZ

Answers to December

1. The single Fenian who escaped from WA in 1869 was John Boyle O'Reilly.
2. The *James Mathews*, wrecked on 23 July 1841 in Cockburn Sound, had previously been a slave ship named *Don Francisco*.
3. Although both a ketch and a yawl have two masts, in a ketch the mizzen mast is in front of the rudder head and in a yawl it is behind the rudder head. This results in a smaller mizzen sail in a yawl.

Quiz

1. In rigging, what is the difference between a deadeye and a heart?
2. Complete this old saying by filling in the missing lines:
Comes the rain before the wind
.....
Comes the wind before the rain
.....
3. In 1852 a ship was wrecked on a reef off Wanneroo north of Perth. Two people were drowned, and later the reef was named after the wreck. What was the name of the ship?

During a tour on HMS Victory, a French tourist asked 'So, were these the actual cannonballs fired at Trafalgar?'

The tour guide replied, 'No, Madame, your Navy still has those....'



But there were among men a few, a very few, who used both their hands and their heads, and they achieved a happiness which nigh unto passeth the understanding...These men felt neither cold nor hunger, pain nor weariness. To be sure, their teeth fell out and they had the other weaknesses of the flesh, but their work shows the perfect harmony that they lived in, for they worked with both their hands and their heads.

L. Francis Herreshoff.





The Long Way Home

By Ron Forsyth



Wreck of the Ship Governor Ready in Torres Straits
by Lieutenant George Edward Nicholas Weston (1796-1856)

Published in the book *Narrative of a Voyage round the World* by Thomas Braidwood Wilson in 1835

Dr. Thomas Braidwood Wilson R.N. was a regular visitor to Australia during the early years of European settlement. Leading an eventful life, he has been described as surgeon, explorer, botanist, pastoralist, and member of the Royal Geographical Society. Born in West Lothian, Scotland in 1792, he studied medicine at Edinburgh University and joined the Royal Navy in 1815. That year a royal naval surgeon had been required to accompany each convict transport. This position was second only to the captain. Many convicts had previously died during the long and gruelling sea journeys due to diseases, poor living conditions, and harsh treatment. Some estimates suggest that in the late 18th century, the mortality rate could be as high as 25% or more on some voyages.

Between 1822 and 1836 he was surgeon-superintendent on nine ships that delivered almost 2,000 convicts to Van Diemen's Land and New South Wales from England and Ireland.

In 1827 he oversaw the transportation of two hundred convicts by the ship *Governor Ready*, 512 tons, to Hobart. Proud of his stewardship he

wrote of ...*a very pleasant passage, during which the utmost harmony and quietness uninterruptedly prevailed.* He had great success in preserving the lives of convicts under his care by insisting on cleanliness and a daily issue of lime juice and wine. He taught convicts how to read and write, conducted divine service and would not permit *the slightest slang, flash songs nor swearing*, for fear of further personal degradation.

Chartered to return to Ireland for another load of convicts, a cargo of sugar from the Isle of France (now Mauritius) had been organised for the ship. On reaching Hobart Town they learnt the cargo had been cancelled. The *Governor Ready's* reputation had been damaged the previous year when, too heavily laden, she shipped water in a gale and much of her cargo of sugar was damaged.

Captain Young decided to return via Batavia. This was not Wilson's preferred route. He had bad memories of being shipwrecked in the Java Sea to the north of Bali. After his first delivery of convicts to Van Diemen's Land in 1821, his ship the *Richmond* was wrecked there the next year.



The season, explained Wilson, was rather too far advanced for us to expect a favourable passage round Cape Leuwin (sic.); but as, according to Horsburgh's Directory, good passages had occasionally been effected as late, and even later, it was considered prudent to make the attempt, more especially as it was too early in the season for passing through Torres' Straits, a route under the most favourable circumstances, beset with intricacy and danger. Influenced by these considerations, we purposed to beat to windward; but the ship being very light - hardly in ballast trim - it was not expected that much progress could be made to the westward until the wind became more favourable.

Even though her intended destination was Ireland, voyaging via Cape Horn, the shortest way home, does not seem to have been considered. Perhaps a cargo from Batavia or even Mauritius was hoped for. The return around the 'Horn' seems not to have been the favoured route by many early nineteenth century seafarers – the seaworthiness of their vessels not always up to the task. Wilson had in fact turned down a direct return via Cape Horn on the *Mermaid*. A career naval officer, he seemed in no hurry to return to his young wife and baby daughter. He would not see them again for over two years.

It proved to be an unhappy decision as they battled fierce gales and tempestuous seas for three weeks. Having only reached the middle of the Great Australian Bight, and sustaining loss of canvas and damage to the ship, the helm was ordered up and sails squared away. This brought immediate relief to an exhausted crew, fatigued by constant making or taking in sail under severe conditions. Thirty hours running with the westerly undid the work of the previous weeks.

Matthew Flinders had considered that '... perhaps no space of 3/4 degrees in length represents more dangers than Torres Strait'.

Governor King in a letter to Sir Joseph Banks in 1805, asserted that until buoys and pilots were adopted, the intricacy of Torres Strait would be a bar to that route being followed.

Strewn with numerous islands, reefs and shoals, the straits are the meeting place of the Pacific and Indian Oceans and are subject to tidal rips, sudden squalls and storms.

The first detailed maps of Torres Straits were not made until the 1850's.

To this day it is considered one of the most hazardous and navigationally difficult stretches of water in the world routinely used by international shipping.

A smoother passage around the top of the continent was hoped for. Without the charts of the north coast of New Holland or the Indian Archipelago, except the first sheet of Flinders' north coast, they were, however, poorly prepared. The passage around the top of Australia had already claimed several shipwrecks and was yet to be well surveyed. Its south-east trade winds were favourable for a ship sailing westward between May and November. Some insurance was offered also, if the worst eventuated, of harbours of refuge in the ports of Coupang, Batavia, India and Mauritius.

Passing inside Wreck Reef, the advised passage to Torres Strait, they were able to verify their position by the meridian altitude of several stars and correct their chronometers. Nearly a quarter of a century earlier Flinders had embedded the hazard's position when he was wrecked there in HMS *Porpoise* outside the Barrier Reef in the south Coral Sea.

Mid-afternoon of 19 May their worst fears were realised when they hit a coral reef between Murray and Halfway Islands while negotiating Torres Strait. Within a few minutes the water was up to the lower deck and hasty preparations were made for their survival. Reminiscent of Bligh in 1789 they were stranded in the same waters, miles from assistance. Melville Island, 900 miles away, was the closest point of European settlement and this, they had heard in Sydney, was on the point of being abandoned.

The ship's skiff, jolly boat and long boat were all launched and filled with such provisions only considered vital to their survival. The latter craft was in serious need of re-caulking and leaked badly. Laden with thirty-nine castaways the little boats had dangerously little freeboard. Captain Young and Wilson manned the poorly maintained long boat.

The strict discipline that Bligh had managed on board the *Bounty Launch* in these waters was harder to maintain across three boats with a quantity of brandy having been smuggled aboard from the *Governor Ready*. Better provisioned than Bligh their craft were, however, far less seaworthy.

Captain Young and his officers were puzzled to find the position of Wednesday Island incorrectly positioned in their copies of both Horsburgh's Directory and Lynne's Tables. They fastidiously updated navigational knowledge with their re-



cordings such as the discovery of the Duncan Islands in the central straits.

The extreme fragility of the long boat was revealed when respite was taken on a small island. Low tide revealed the extent of the problem:

Besides standing much in need of caulking, and other repairs, it was discovered that the worms had committed sad havoc, several of the planks in her bottom being in an alarmingly decayed state, from their depredations. In short, the carpenter was afraid to meddle with her, lest he might make affairs worse, - but it was absolutely necessary that something should be done. We had no pitch, but we had a considerable quantity of oakum, and the carpenter was directed to chintz the worst places very gently, and afterwards to apply some tallow, and then to nail canvas overall. These operations being completed, he was to fix the tarpawling bulwark in a more secure and efficient manner, that we might be protected from the disagreeable intrusion of the spray. The other boats being in good order, and well-found, only required a bulwark, or railing, to render them completely sea-worthy. The sail-makers were directed to convert the fore-royal into a lug-sail, and to make a jib from some spare canvas, that we might be enabled to make progress on a wind.

The jolly boat was abandoned when its crew took fright in a hurricane and implored to be taken aboard the long boat. Further burdened with another eight castaways the long boat almost capsized when the terrified men rushed to board her. Despite her unsafe condition the boat survived being swamped twice. To further compound their anxiety, they had parted contact with the skiff in a gale. Melville Island was overrun because of the weather, and it was decided to proceed to Coupang at Timor.

While approaching Coupang they encountered the colonial brig *Amity* working out of the bay. They had sailed and rowed an estimated 1,000 miles (1,609km).

Dr. Wilson seems to have acted with considerable autonomy as he accompanied the brig to Raffles Bay, wishing to make his way back to Sydney. He was later to claim that the ordeal had cost him considerably.

To great relief the skiff turned up a little later with all twelve crew alive. At the height of the gale, in desperation, they had lashed the masts, yards, and

oars together and tying them to the bow threw them into the sea. For over thirty hours it acted as a sea anchor.

This had been a torrid time for shipping in the Torres Strait. As well as the *Governor Ready*, the Government schooner *Mermaid* (which had circumnavigated Australia under Captain Phillip Parker King and Lt. John Septimus Roe in 1817), *Swiftsure* and *Comet* were all wrecked there within a period of days. The *Jupiter*, *Resource* and *Admiral Gifford* had also suffered damage there.

He spent some time at Raffles Bay in what is now the Northern Territory. This troubled outpost settlement was on the point of being abandoned.

Departing the now deserted port at Raffles Bay with Captain Barker on the *Governor Phillip* they made for the Swan River. Wilson later discovered that most of his fellow castaways, after surviving the previous ordeals, died of illness in Batavia.

They arrived at Fremantle mid-October of 1829, less than four months after Stirling proclaimed the new colony in June where he learnt:

... that a great number of settlers had already arrived from England, most of whom yet resided at Freemantle, the sea-port town; that nineteen ships had entered the roads; that all the land on the banks of the river was already given away; and that the dismantled vessel was



Dr Thomas Braidwood Wilson RN



the Marquis of Anglesey, driven on shore, having parted from three cables in a N. W. gale; he also pointed out to us the mouth of the river, and we were greatly disappointed by its apparent insignificance.

At Arthur's Head at the mouth of the Swan River he claimed they had taken 'upwards of 200 lunar observations, with carefully adjusted sextants.' He found its longitude to be twenty miles farther east than Governor Stirling placed it. This was symbolic of the poor foundations of the Swan River colony. He was to make a lasting observation that Fremantle was so sandy that it could be run through an hour-glass.

While at the Swan River and later at Frederickstown (now Albany) he was involved in exploration and collected seeds and roots of many W.A plants for the Sydney Botanic Gardens. A species of grevillea from Western Australia, *Grevillea Wilsoni* was named after him and he is remembered for importing the first hive of bees to Van Diemen's Land.

Governor Stirling named Wilson's Inlet, Denmark after him in appreciation of his exploration work and discovery of good country on the south coast. His exploration from Albany west as far as Wilson Inlet (Denmark) and north to the vicinity of present day Kendenup and back to Albany is one of the earliest in the new colony.

By April 1830 the *Governor Phillip* arrived back in Sydney. It wasn't until 9 April 1830 that Thomas Wilson sailed from Sydney on the *Surrey* via Cape Horn bound for England where he arrived 2 August.

Thus, he recorded, did I complete another voyage round the world, during which I experienced some dangers, many privations, and great pecuniary loss—not having been insured, although a former similar calamity might have taught me to act more prudently.

In 1836 he made his ninth and final voyage as surgeon superintendent in convict ships in the *Strathfield*. He was accompanied this time by his wife Jane (nee Thompson) and nine-year-old daughter Mary to settle in Van Diemen's Land.

He exchanged his land grants in Tasmania to what is now Braidwood in NSW. Known as the 'Laird of Braidwood' he served as magistrate there.

The first arrival of Highland cattle into Australia came on board the Sovereign in 1829, imported by Lieutenant Surgeon Thomas Braidwood Wilson RN, namesake of the town of Braidwood in New South Wales. Lieutenant Surgeon Wilson owned a 12,000acre property in Braidwood named Braidwood Farm that employed a huge workforce of 140 men by the early 1830's. Once disembarking in Sydney Town, Lieutenant Surgeon Wilson's imports were driven overland to Braidwood Farm. In 1838 a huge drought hit the region and, the Shoal having dried up, district records show that Dr Wilson and Captain John Coghill turned over 1000 long-horned Highland cattle into the hills surrounding Braidwood, never to be recovered. It is reported that young men of the district had great sport in shooting the 'wild beast' over many years later (<https://www.australianhighlandcattle.org/>).

If Wilson seems to have lived under a lucky star, that star waned after he left the sea. After settling at Braidwood his wife and infant son died there. During the drought and depression of the early 1840's he was declared bankrupt and sadly is thought to have committed suicide on 15 April 1845 (New South Wales Govt. Gazette, 22 Apr 1845).

Sources:

Australian Dictionary of Biography.
McInnes, A., 1979, *Dangers and Difficulties of the Torres Strait and Inner Route.*
Trove newspapers.
Wilson, T.B., 1835, *Narrative of a Voyage Round the World*





On the 24th of January it was 25 years ago that the *Duyfken* Replica was launched

The MHA celebrated this historic fact at the Orient Bar in Fremantle.

This is the speech given by our secretary to open proceedings

We acknowledge the original Custodians of the Wadjuk Noongar on which land we gather today, and pay our respects to their Elders past and present. We also pay respect to the custodians of the Pennefather river where the original *Duyfken* landed in 1606.

I am the secretary of the Maritime Heritage Association. and we welcome all members here of the MHA. There will be also a raffle with the money going to the Fremantle Volunteer Sea Rescue Group Inc.

Jill Worsley made an amazing quilt with the *Duyfken* on it and it was won by Cameron, a former member of the *Duyfken* crew who was pleasantly surprised and very happy with this wonderful quilt. The MHA raised \$160 for the Fremantle Volunteer Sea Rescue Group Inc.

We also welcome members and crew of the former *Duyfken* Replica Foundation, the members of ABBA and OGA WA and all people who are interested in the Maritime history of our Little Dove and would like to raise a glass with us. A special welcome to George Kailis, Janine Young the wife of late Michael Young (Jacob Jong) the founder of the *Duyfken* Replica, and deputy mayor Jenny Archibald.

It was a pity that one of our most revered and distinguished members, Bill Leonard (William McDonald Leonard) could not be here. But we raise a glass to him. What our chair Nick Burningham earlier wrote in the MHA journal came together on this anniversary. There was widely the feeling that Fremantle must continue to be the centre of excellence in replica ship building. In retrospect, we should have proclaimed that Fremantle be the Bill Leonard Centre of Excellence for Replica Ship Building. We think that maritime heritage is really important for a city like Fremantle and there is so much to celebrate these past months!

40 years since *Australia II* won the Americas cup on 26th of September. If you haven't seen the exhibition yet, go and check it out, it is fantastic

and it ends the 4th of February in WAM. 30 years since the *Endeavour* Replica was launched on the 9th of December (thanks Mike Lefroy and John Longley for the wonderful anniversary). And this anniversary of the *Duyfken* Replica 25 years ago.

There was a plan to celebrate the 25th anniversary of *Duyfken* Replica in a big way five years ago, but little did we know that the Little Dove would fly away on 4th of December 2020 to Sydney on a Spliethoff ship to Newcastle, and then it sailed to the ANMM.

Two years ago, we celebrated the 25 years since the laying of the keel of the *Duyfken* with an exhibition in the Shipwrecks Museum which attracted 5,000 visitors. At the last meeting of the *Duyfken* Foundation I said; even though the *Duyfken* Replica is no longer here, we can still celebrate 25 years since the launching of the *Duyfken* Replica.

Graeme Cocks helped with the exhibition by loaning artifacts and all kinds of information about the 30 years of the history of the start of the *Duyfken* Foundation. Graeme wrote a book last year about his connection with the *Duyfken* Replica; *Through Darkest Seas* and it is one of the best books I have read about the *Duyfken*, but also about building a replica. This book gets under your skin. It is a must if you love maritime heritage! We should cherish the history of building boats and honour the wonderful people who still carry on this tradition and craftsmanship.

This is what Graeme Cocks wrote:
MHA arranged a wonderful reunion of 25 years of Duyfken supporters including members of the original 'Friends of the Duyfken', shipwrights and crew. Many people who have been a part of the Duyfken story attended the event at the Orient in Fremantle. Thanks Elly and MHA for bringing us all together. It was a pleasure to be able to sign books with the significant date - 24/1/24 - exactly 25 years since the launch of our amazing ship.



Graeme Cox talks about his book Through Darkest Seas

The Duyfken quilt raffled by MHA, proceeds towards the Fremantle Volunteer Marine Rescue Group





Eastern Mediterranean Reflections

By Nick Burningham



Your absentee Chairman was strolling down the promenade of Thessaloniki recently, or perhaps I was promenading down the cornice ... I was reflecting on maritime heritage, as I often do, when I descried ahead of me two shapely little lateen-rigged craft and a World War II Fletcher class destroyer!

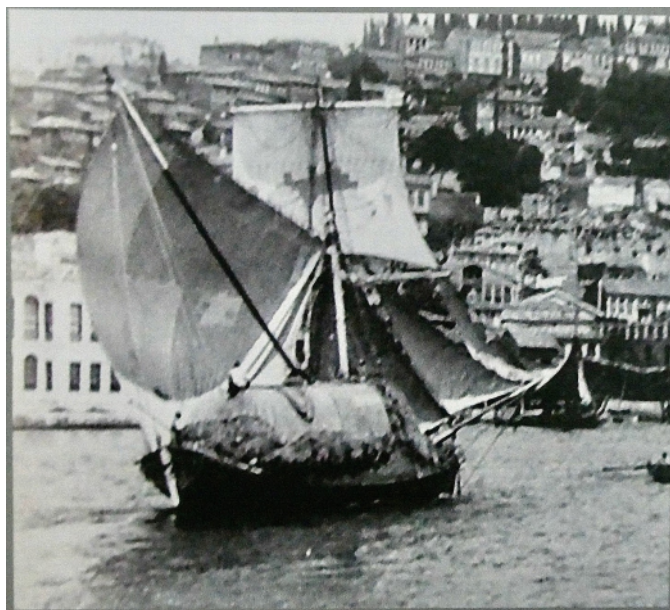
My old eyes were not deceiving me. The two-masted lateen rigged boats had rather the shape of Thames wherries and might have been regarded as feluccas – I'd love to sail or even row one of them.

And the WWII destroyer was HS (Hellenic Ship) VELOS II, ex USS CHARETTE, launched in 1942. She'd seen plenty of action in the Pacific, including supporting the landings at the Marshall Islands, the Marianas, and Okinawa.

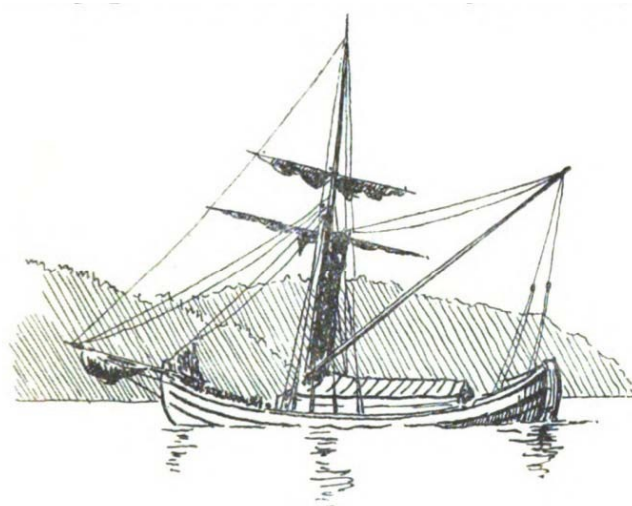
After a significant refit, she was donated to the Hellenic Navy in 1959. During 32 years service in the Greek navy she covered more than 360,000 nautical miles and took part in many exercises, and the several crises in the relationship between

Greece and Turkiye. But she became famous, and remains afloat as a museum ship, because of her role in the Hellenic Navy's mutiny against the military coup of 1967 and the resulting dictatorship of the generals. Naval officers who were suspected of supporting a return to democracy were tortured by the regime, and there were apparently plenty of them. In May 1973 HS VELOS II, under commander Nikolaos Pappas, while participating in a NATO exercise, defected to the Italian port of Fiumicino to draw international attention to the dictatorship in Greece which they did very successfully. The military junta collapsed in June 1974. Commander Pappas returned to the Hellenic Navy and eventually reached the rank of Vice-Admiral.

Thessaloniki has a small privately run maritime museum. It might actually be the worst in the world! There's nothing there to hold your interest for more than a couple of minutes. But in other museums that commemorate non-maritime aspects of the city's often tragic history there are old postcards and photographs that show local sailing craft in the background.

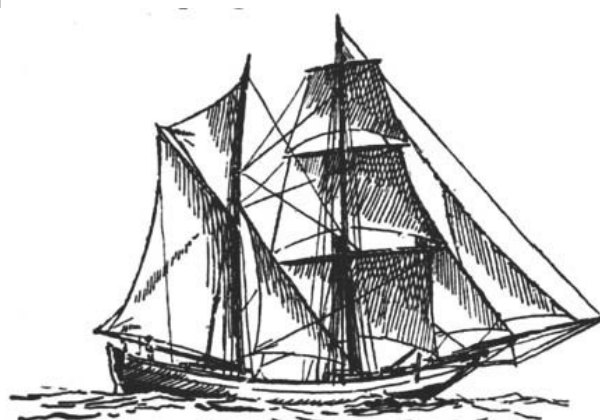


I'd been in Istanbul a couple of weeks previous and had gone to the Naval Museum there, to ogle its perfectly preserved galley and many other fine stately vessels, and I'd noticed a small photograph in one obscure display showing a single-masted sprit-rigged vessel with a large square topsail and a bowsprit so long that it seemed to be sailing a day ahead of the vessel. She was seemingly carrying a hay stack, like a stackie barge on the Thames or Medway, but she had a different approach to the cargo reef that kept the mainsail clear of the high cargo: the bunt of the sail forward of a line from the clew to the nock was neatly rolled-up, or otherwise folded. She was reaching boldly into a harbour under full sail ... and she was just one of the most charming small craft I've ever seen a photo of.



TURKISH COASTER

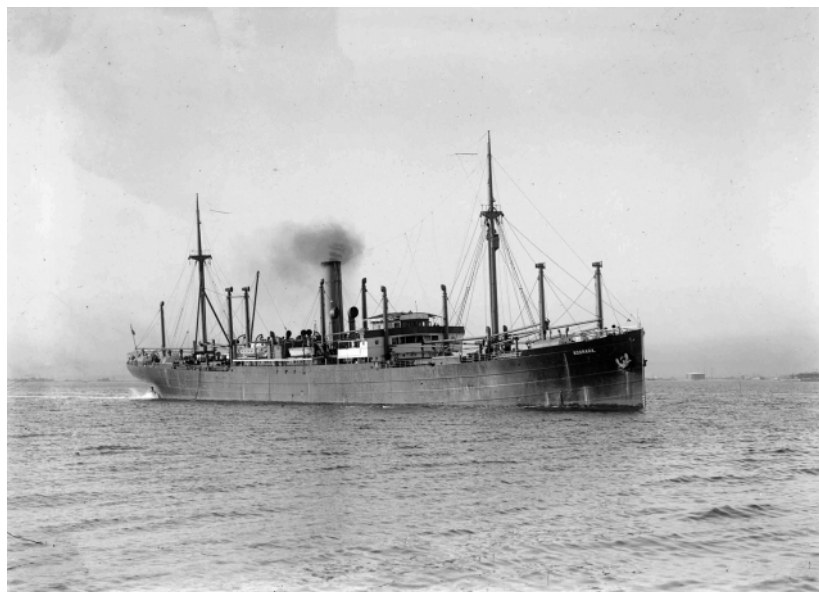
Thus it was that I was scouring those old photographs for local craft. There were a few of what I took to be Levantine schooners with their raked masts and leg-o-mutton rig, and smaller single-masted versions of very rakish and tall-masted appearance. A Turkish brigantine or two, and plenty of smaller lateen-rigged boats. But they were nearly always in the middle-distance or the background. No detail could be discerned. As heritage they are very nearly lost I suspect. There are few sketches in *Mast and sail in Europe and Asia* by H. Warington Smyth, 1906, and nice though they are, they provide no more detail. And interestingly Warington Smyth did not record the Levantine schooners – it seems that when he was in the Eastern Mediterranean the Levantine coasters were still polacre brigantines, or brigs, as were the larger Turkish coasting vessels. They lost their yards and became schooners in the 20th century.



LEVANTINE BRIGANTINE—POLACRE RIGGED



Pfalz—a tough ship to sink



The Boorara

stowed as a troop ship. It was re-named HMAT *Boorara* with the number A42, and took part in the second convoy to the Mediterranean. It also transported Turkish POWs from the Dardanelles to Egypt. In July 1915 *Boorara* was accidentally rammed by the French cruiser *Kleber* in the Aegean, was beached at Mudros, patched up and later taken to Naples for repairs.

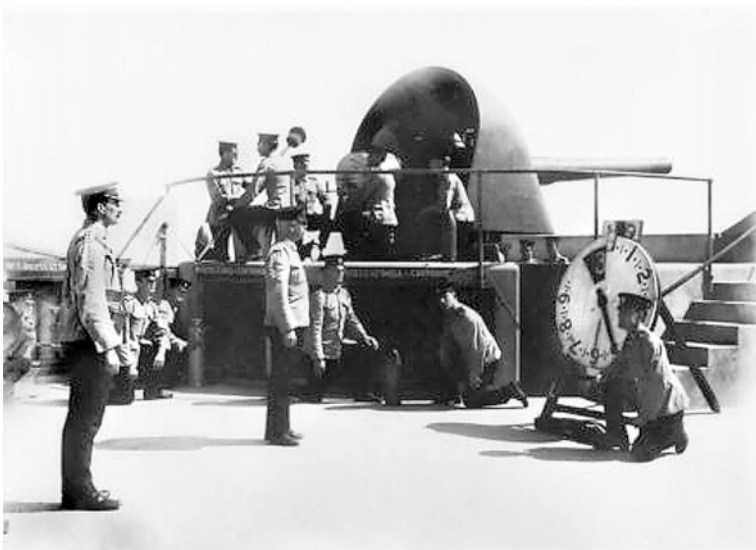
Later during World War I *Boorara* was torpedoed twice, the first time on 20 March 1918 near Beachy Head. It was towed to Newcastle for extensive repairs. Four months later on 23 July it was again struck by a torpedo, this time near Whitby. *Boorara* was again repaired, and was subsequently used in 1919 to repatriate Australian troops.

The 6,557 ton German steamer *Pfalz* owned by the Norddeutscher Lloyd line and registered at Bremen was powered by a triple expansion engine built in Newcastle, UK, driving a single propeller. The master of the *Pfalz* had heard of the imminent possibility of war, so after hastily discharging all its cargo it obtained clearance, and departed Victoria Dock, Melbourne, on 5 August 1914. The pilot on board was Captain Montgomery Robinson. Although stopped by the examining vessel, *Alvina*, the *Pfalz*'s papers were in order and the steamer was allowed to proceed. Just as the ship approached Port Phillip Heads, the Royal Australian Garrison Artillery stationed at Fort Nepean was informed that war had been declared with Germany. The order given to Fort Nepean was 'stop her or sink her'. Signals were hoisted commanding the ship to stop, but were ignored. A shot across the ship's bows from one of the fort's 6 inch guns became the first shot of World War I fired by any British Empire country. Captain Robinson convinced the ship's master that a second round would be aimed directly at the *Pfalz*, and the steamer was turned about and taken back. The crew were arrested and the ship taken as a prize of war.

The *Pfalz* was requisitioned by the Royal Australian Navy and re-fitted at William-

After the war the Commonwealth Line used the ship, once again refitted, to transport frozen cargo to the UK. It was sold in 1926 to the Greek shipping line of Elias Hadjilias, and re-named *Nereus*. In August 1937 the *Nereus* sailed in ballast from Japan for Port Alberni to load a cargo of timber for the UK. On 8 August, in heavy fog, the *Nereus* ran onto rocks just south-east of Cape Beale on Vancouver Island. The crew were rescued by a salvage tug, but the *Nereus* very quickly became a total loss.

Peter Worsley



The gun at Fort Nepean that fired the first shot



Mischief

The loss of the yacht *Mischief* with the death of one of the crew on 17 December 1887 resulted in the introduction of rules for the safety of yachts racing on the Swan River. There is no indication in the references of the size or who built the yacht *Mischief*. However, Alfred Edmund Brown, one of Fremantle's foremost boat-builders was on board during the incident described below, so it is possible that he was the builder. The yacht was owned by H.F. Lane, the secretary of the Perth Yacht Club, and ballasted with lead and iron. During the afternoon of Saturday 17 December 1887 it was being sailed in a race for the Perth Yacht Clubs' Crawley Cup. On board were Carlton Richard Pether, Henry 'Harry' Pether, Thomas Lowden (a German), Alfred Edmund Brown and Arthur Heath Tiddy. There were no oars or life buoys on board, and the bottom boards had been taken out and left behind to lighten the yacht for racing. Tiddy, a ledger keeper with the Bank of New South Wales, had arrived from Sydney ten months previously. He had informed the other members of the crew that he had sailed yachts in Sydney. It was therefore assumed that he could swim.

The yachts in the race sailed to Lucky Bay in a fresh south-west breeze. After rounding the marker buoy, the *Mischief* squared away for the sail back to Perth. Harry Pether was at the helm, and at this time the spinnaker was set. The yacht was rolling when it was suddenly struck by a strong gust of wind from the southward. This resulted in the yacht heeling sufficiently for the boom to dip into the waves. This dragged the yacht over, when it immediately sank in 35 ft (10.7 m) of water. The five men, all of whom were fully clothed, were left floundering in the water. At this time it was realized that Tiddy could not swim. Carlton Pether went to assist Tiddy, but had to leave him when Tiddy grabbed him, forcing him underwater. Pether was afraid that Tiddy would drown him, and pulled clear. He looked around without success for something that would support Tiddy. Lowden also tried to assist, but also had to leave Tiddy for fear of being dragged under.

By then, being dressed in heavy water-logged clothes, they were all rapidly tiring, so the four

who could swim left Tiddy and, to save their lives, attempted to swim for the nearest shore. This was a mile away, and not long before they reached it the exhausted swimmers were picked up by the yacht *Sunbeam*, which had tacked back to their rescue. Subsequent dragging for Tiddy's body by police and volunteers was unsuccessful until Richard Wynne discovered it about 2.00 p.m. the following day, 200 metres from where the *Mischief* sank.

An inquest into the death of Tiddy was held by the acting coroner, J.F. Stone, with a jury of John Arnold, W. Britnall and W. Rowland. The verdict was that Arthur Heath Tiddy was accidentally drowned by the upsetting of the *Mischief*. A rider to the verdict stated that 'we are of opinion that yachts and other pleasure boats should be compelled to carry at least two properly fitted life-buoys' (*Daily News*, 22 December 1887: 3g). They also stated that they thought 'greater exertion might have been used to save the deceased' (*West Australian*, 21 December 1887: 2h). This latter statement was later withdrawn.

As a result of the accident to the *Mischief* Mr Wilkinson of the Bank of New South Wales donated £5 to the Perth Yacht Club to buy life buoys. Also the club formulated three rules covering safety during races:

1. *No person or persons shall be allowed to sail in or form part of the crew of any yacht competing in any race under the auspices of the club unless he can swim and that the owner of the yacht be held responsible for the due observance of this rule.*
2. *That every boat according to her size be compelled to carry during any such race life saving apparatus loose either on deck or in the well, and ready for immediate use, as may in the opinion of the starter be sufficient to ensure the safety of the crew.*
3. *The non-compliance with either of these rules disqualify any boat for any race. Members are also strongly advised to keep the life buoys and life saving apparatus on board on all occasions* (*Daily News*, 22 December 1887: 3f).

Peter Worsley



The Convict Ship *Rajah* – and its Quilt

Unique amongst Australia's treasures now held at the National Art Gallery in Canberra is the *Rajah* quilt, noteworthy because it is believed to be the only surviving patchwork quilt made on board by convict women sentenced to serve in Australia. They arrived in Van Diemen's Land from Woolwich in 1841, having started and completed the quilt during the voyage of the *Rajah*.

The genesis of the *Rajah* quilt lies with Elizabeth Fry, a Quaker with a passion for prison reform in England. She felt that convict women living in appalling gaol conditions should not be left idle, but should be given meaningful work. This was felt to be especially beneficial if skills were taught, which would enable the women to become self-sufficient through these skills when their sentences expired. Consequently, she persuaded her Quaker friends to supply her with fabric scraps, thread, needles and other simple sewing requirements to be passed on to women (many of them accompanied and responsible for the support of young children) in English gaols or on prison ships. She further persuaded several 'ladies' of her own social standing and religious convictions to accompany prisoners to the colonies, acting as 'matrons' on board during the voyages.

Elizabeth Fry organised the women to make patchwork quilts on 106 ships coming to Australia, *Rajah* being amongst them. Many of the convict quilts were sold in Rio de Janeiro or Cape Town – the *Rajah* quilt being the only one surviving in Australia. Money raised from the sale of their work enabled the women to be a little independent when their sentences expired. The *Rajah* quilt is also unusual in that it was never for sale, it was intended to be a thank you present to the ladies who had supplied the fabrics and threads used during the voyage.

The *Rajah* patchwork quilt is a collaborative effort of possibly 20 different women with varying skill levels, they having previously been dressmakers or tailoresses – others

were less skilled as is shown by their uneven stitches and small blood stains on some of the seams. The work was almost certainly supervised by young Miss Kezia Haytor who was a highly skilled needlewoman inspired by Elizabeth Fry, acting as matron on the *Rajah* during this voyage. (Two years later she was to marry the Captain, Charles Fergusson).

The quilt the women made is a mixture of patchwork and applique, with a central medallion surrounded by pieced border blocks. You will be familiar with this setting – while very suitable for a group project, it is often also used in making your own MHA raffle quilts !

This literary contribution by your own resident quilt maker

References:
Gero, Annette, *Historic Australian Quilts*, 2nd edition. Published by The National Trust of Australia (NSW), 2002.

Crowley, Trudy & Snowden, Dianne, *Patchwork Prisoners*. Published by Research Tasmania,





The loss of the *Mary*

By Peter Worsley

During the night of 10 September 1946 a heavy gale caused the fishing boat *Mary* to drag its moorings and drift ashore at Cervantes Beach. The *Mary* was a ketch-rigged, 55ft fishing boat fitted with a bowsprit and owned (or part owned) by Bartolo Tomba of Fremantle. It was worth about £3,000, but was not insured. The *Mary* was not badly damaged, and none of the six Italian crew were hurt. They appear to have camped under a sail on the beach. The owner only found out about the stranding several days later when advised by the crew of another fishing boat, *Viking*. Tomba sailed on the *Stella* for the scene of the grounding, taking with him Leonard James Back, a shipwright from Fremantle.

By early 1 October repair work and the re-floating of the *Mary* had been completed, and at 6.15am the fishing boat *Lapwing* (Tony Lacava skipper), which had an engine, began to tow the *Mary* out to sea. The towline was 150ft long and the *Mary* had set all sail to assist the *Lapwing* during the tow over the sandbar. *Lapwing* had cleared the bar, but as the *Mary* reached it a wave said to be 50ft high struck her. This slewed the boat round slightly and heeled it over. Another large wave then struck the boat, filling the sails and capsizing the vessel. For their own safety the crew on the *Lapwing* immediately cut the towline. Leonard Back, who was on the *Mary* with the six crew was swept overboard. Back took off his coat and after swimming for ten minutes found an upturned dinghy. He clung to this, man-

aging to take off his pullover. He saw one of the crew and yelled to him, but the man disappeared.

The crew of the *Lapwing* managed to get their vessel over the bar into the lagoon on their third attempt, and rescued Back after he had spent two hours clinging to the upturned dinghy. The *Lapwing* and another fishing boat, the *Capo Orlando*, continued to search the area for four days, but saw no sign of the six missing crew. Police parties from Moora and Gin Gin under the charge of Sergeant R.N. Broun searched the coast, but without finding any trace of crew or wreck. It was thought that the crew had been carried out to sea or into a reef. Leonard Back's survival was considered to be because he was not wearing sea boots or heavy clothing at the time, and this helped him stay afloat long enough to reach the dinghy.

On 13 October two fishing boats reported that they had seen the hull of the *Mary* drifting across Jurien Bay about twelve miles to the north.

Those lost were:

Luigi Pittorino, married with six children.
Giovanni Germinano, married with five children.
Domenico Capelluti, married with four children.
Antonio Marino, single.
Silvio Marchessi, single.
Mauro Caputo, single.
All were from Fremantle.

Did You Know?

The 1816 English 'Laws for the Prevention of Smuggling' had as one of its clauses:

Any person loitering within five miles of the sea-coast or any navigable river, with intent, as is suspected, to assist in running goods, is to be brought before a justice; and, if unable to give a satisfactory account of his calling or employment, shall be committed to the House of Correction, to be whipped and kept to hard labour for any time not exceeding one month. And if any person shall desire time for making it clear that he was not concerned in any fraudulent practices, the justice may commit him to gaol until he shall make proof to the satisfaction of the justice.

So much for being innocent until proven guilty !



A Visit to the Historical Naval attractions of Portsmouth

Part 2 of David Nicolson's article and photographs



A stern view of HMS Victory

The second part of my story to Portsmouth takes us to the other side of Portsmouth Harbour, that is, to the Portsmouth Historic Dockyard. It is possible to take a ferry across to the dockyard facilities, however I chose to drive since I needed my car to complete the next stage of my journey. The dockyard complex is huge and has a number of unmissable attractions and I only had an afternoon to visit them all.

The 'Boathouse 4' was my first port of call. Boat building started here in the 18th century and continued right through to midget submarines in the Second World War. It now houses a large variety of small boats in various stages of completion. An upper balcony allows visitors to look down on the work being carried out by amateur and professional boat builders. At particular times, the public are allowed on to the working floor to talk to those involved and see close up the work in progress. There is even a small undercover dry dock

for small vessels to undertake refits and repairs. For those interested in wooden boat construction, a visit to Boat House 4 is worth the entry fee alone.

Due to time constraints, I had to limit myself to visiting and photographing HMS *M.33*, The Mary Rose Museum and of course, HMS *Victory*.

HMS *M.33* is one of the last surviving British First World War ships still in existence. Originally built in 1915 under the express orders of Winston Churchill, at that time First Lord of the Admiralty, HMS *M.33* is the sole British survivor of the Dardanelles Campaign (1915-1916). Painstakingly restored after an incredible 70 years in active service, *M.33* lives on as testament to Gallipoli and of perseverance against all odds. Over the years HMS *M.33* gained the reputation of being a 'lucky ship'. Despite the huge casualties of the Dardanelles campaign, she was never



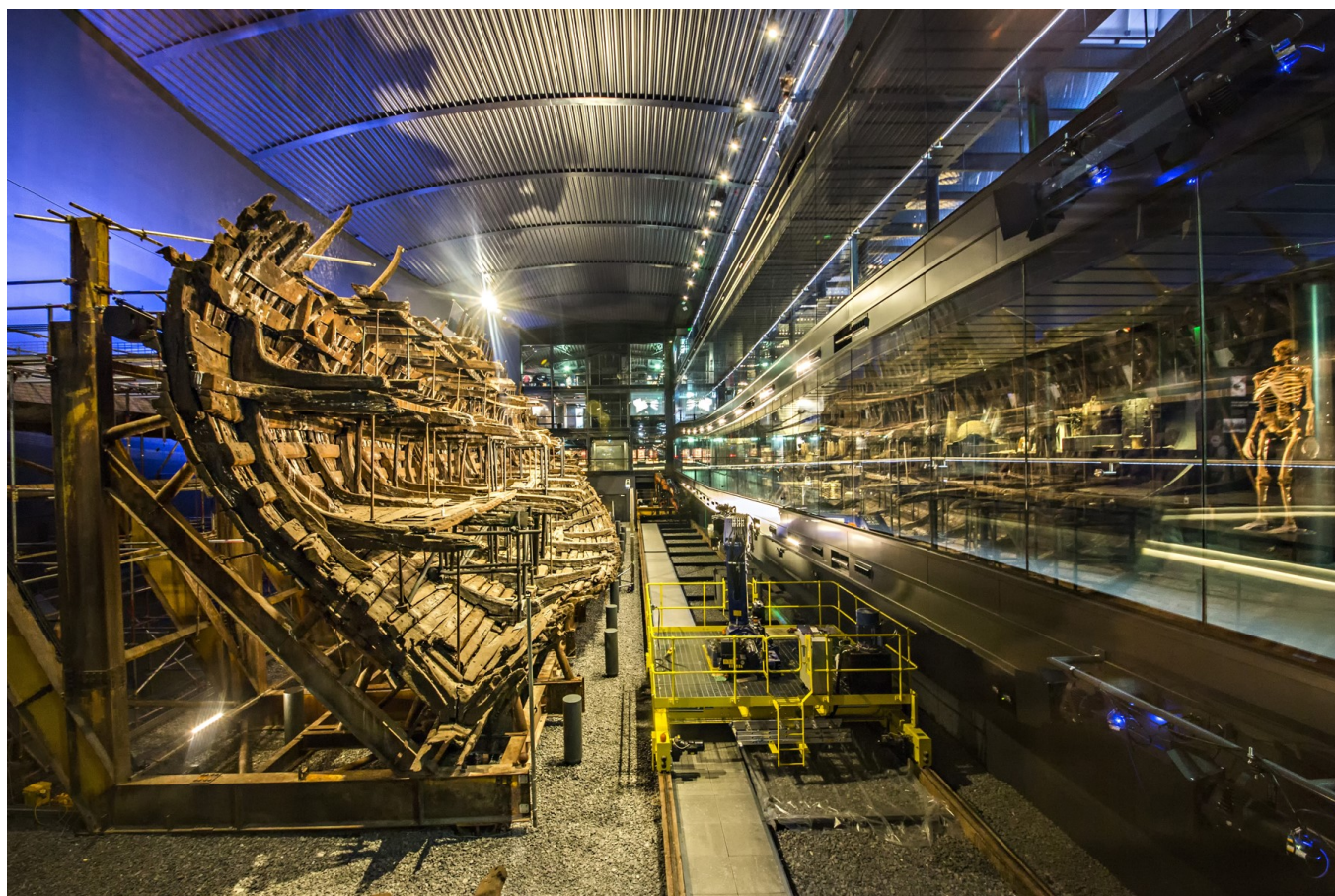
hit by enemy fire, an incredibly rare achievement. Her luck has endured over the years, surviving when nearly all other ships of this era have been lost or destroyed. She is now one of three British ships left from the First World War, and hopefully will remain preserved into the future. At the time of my visit work was still being done to allow visitors on board. Now guides take you on board hosting a film show and an exhibition dedicated to the Gallipoli campaign.

One of the star attractions at the dockyard is the Mary Rose Museum. The museum recommends two hours visiting time to see the remains of the once great ship and see the 19,000 artefacts! The building is divided into two main sections: the reserved remains of the hull, and the artifacts and history of the time. The preserved section of the ship is the highlight of the display and can be viewed at three different levels, the bottom two from behind glass.

Building started on the *Mary Rose* in 1510 and was launched the following year, eventually serving Henry VIII for 34 years before sinking dramatically in 1545 while defending England from a French invasion fleet. There she lay until 1971 when a

team of divers led by the late Alexander McKee, rediscovered the wreck site. Hundreds of divers eventually brought her to the surface in October 1982 and then transported the hull to Portsmouth Dockyard for the conservation process to start. Over the next 30 years she was sprayed with water and then a water-soluble wax to aid in her preservation. The exhibition gives a unique insight into Tudor times with thousands of artifacts and interactive displays.

I then moved on to HMS *Victory*, arguably the most famous ship in the world. HMS *Victory* is a 104-gun first-rate ship of the line of the Royal Navy. She was ordered in 1758, laid down in 1759 and launched in 1765. With 245 years of service as of 2023, she is the world's oldest naval vessel still in commission. She is best known for her role as Lord Nelson's flagship at the Battle of Trafalgar on 21 October 1805. One hundred and fifty men were assigned to build her with around 6,000 trees cut down for her timbers. She is just under 70 m in length overall, has a beam of 15.8 m, carried 104 guns with a displacement of 3,556 tonnes. When fully rigged she carried 5,440 square metres of sail which gave her a maximum speed of 11 knots. On the day of her launch, it was discovered



The restored section of the Mary Rose hull



that her beam exceeded the dock gates, and every available shipwright was engaged in paring down her sides to allow the ship to move into the harbour.

When I saw her in 2017, although still looking incredibly impressive, the full effect of the huge masts was missing since the top sections had been removed. Now, *Victory* is undergoing what is called 'The Big Repair' resulting in most of the ship being covered with scaffolding to protect the restoration work. It is claimed to be a once-in-a-generation task and is one of the largest conservation projects ever taken on by the National Museum of the Royal Navy. The work started in 2022 and could take up to 15 years to complete.

My time at the dockyard had now run out so I was only able to see and photograph HMS *Warrior* from a distance before leaving. I wasn't too concerned since I had had a good tour of her a few years before. *Warrior* was launched in 1860 and at the time the most powerful warship in the world and the pride of Queen Victoria's fleet. Although essentially a wooden ship, she had 202 armour plates each weighing 4.8 tonnes and was capable of reaching a speed of 14.4 knots using her state-of-the-art steam engines. With sails and steam together, she once recorded a top speed of 17.5 knots.

That completes my account of an incredible day visiting the numerous naval themed attractions at Portsmouth.



A quarter view of HMS Victory, notice the lack of top masts