



# THE JOLLY ROGER

RYE HARBOUR SAILING CLUB QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



Summer Series Races  
By John Powell OBE



Dinghies I have raced  
At Rye Harbour  
By Derek Bayntun



River Clean up  
By Eric Zon



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# Who's Who

Commodore: Eric Zon	07740082401	ericzon@lankelma.co.uk
Hon. Secretary: David Townsley	01424 882066	dauidtownsley1@hotmail.co.uk
Treasurer: Jeremy Short	01797 270212	shorts.kent@gmail.com
Membership Secretary: John Powell		rhscmembership@gmail.com
Rear Commodore Dinghies: Simon Marsh	01233 758181	simon@hi-flight.co.uk
Rear Commodore Cruisers: David Preston	01580 754679	dpreston303@btinternet.com
Rear Commodore House: Mick Kirby	01424 753536	mickkirby57@gmail.com
Rescue Boat Coxswain: Mark Whiteman	07785 921408	mwhiteman@hotmail.co.uk
Social Secretary: Claire Powell	01424 882385	clairealisonpowell@hotmail.com
Berthing Master: Jeremy Short	01797 270212	shorts.kent@gmail.com

As we seem to have left the cold weather behind, welcome to this Summer 2021 edition of the Jolly Roger . A warm welcome is extended to the Club's new members. A light-hearted article by one of these, Jonathan Dellar, describes his experiences as a new member.

Derek Bayntun continues his account of his sailing experiences at Rye Harbour with a description of some of the dinghies he has sailed over many years.

Eric Zon describes how volunteers from the Club joined forces with members of the Hastings canoe club one day in to clean rubbish from the River Rother .

The relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions and a gradual improvement in the weather has allowed dinghy sailing to resume and John Powell OBE refer to the start of the delayed Summer series 1 races in his usual Dinghy sailing report.

We have another extract from Richard Cooper's very entertaining book about a lifetime involved in sailing. Copies of his book are available in the Clubhouse in return for a donation to the RNLI.

Finally, if you have ever wondered what it was like to sail around the English coast in a yacht in Victorian times then an account is included at the end of the newsletter. Many of the sights and sounds of such a venture are still the same but, alas, many have been lost although they can be recaptured in this fascinating recollection.



## Message from our Commodore, Eric Zon

*The sailing season has truly started although the weather has been challenging so far. It was great to see the dinghy race on Sunday 9 May and realise what a great fleet of new(ish) dinghies our club members have now. There was a good 20 knot wind with gusts up to 30 knots so the race was in the river. It was great to see several dinghies getting their spinnakers up. The day before we had the River Clean Up (more in the magazine). Cruisers have started racing as well: I have seen Helena Anne, Mallard and Luna out so, hopefully, the others are coming on line shortly.*

*In my winter's enthusiasm I have agreed to do several races with friends, this weekend the Myth of Malham from Cowes to Plymouth and back as a qualifier for the Fastnet which will be in August. Next weekend the Three Rivers Race on the Broads in a lovely old Broads Cruiser. It can take up to 24 hours but it is easier than in an open boat. I will have to shoot through the bridges so fast mast lowering and raising will be required.*

*This was all before I knew that I would have bought myself a boat by now. It is an aluminium Koopmans 46 cutter with lifting keel so I can literally go anywhere. So far we haven't made it further than Holyhead after leaving Ardrossan in Scotland. Anyway, a good shakedown trip and we know what we have to do. I have plenty of stories already but will save those for another issue. The plan is to take her to the Caribbean for the winter, hopefully Barbados in December. In the meantime, I am waiting on spares and the people to fit them.*

*Very pleasing to see new members coming through and even more so to see old ones return. A very warm welcome to you all and wishing all members a great sailing season!*

*Fair winds,*

**Eric**

## New Hands on Deck!



*The Jolly Roger Welcomes the following new members to the Club:*

*Mr Proctor Taylor*

*Ms Monica Adams-Acton*

*Alex Adams-Acton*

*Proctor, Monica and Alex are dinghy sailors.*

*Jonathan Dellar and Kathy Mallan who are interested in dinghies, cruisers and helping out with safety cover.*

*Simon Joynson whose interest is cruiser racing (Simon also crews for Rick Elliott).*

*Ray Baskerville who is a dinghy sailor.*

## Social Events for your Diary

by Claire Powell

*On Sunday 13th June - following sailing- there will be a prizegiving barbecue. Booking is essential (due to limits on numbers) by email to [clairealisonpowell@hotmail.com](mailto:clairealisonpowell@hotmail.com) by 6 June.*

*31st July Summer supper and entertainment by the Rye Bay Crew at the clubhouse. Book a place by 14th July by email to the email address above.*

In hindsight, I think that I should have done more dinghy sailing when I was (slightly) younger, but you can't change the past!

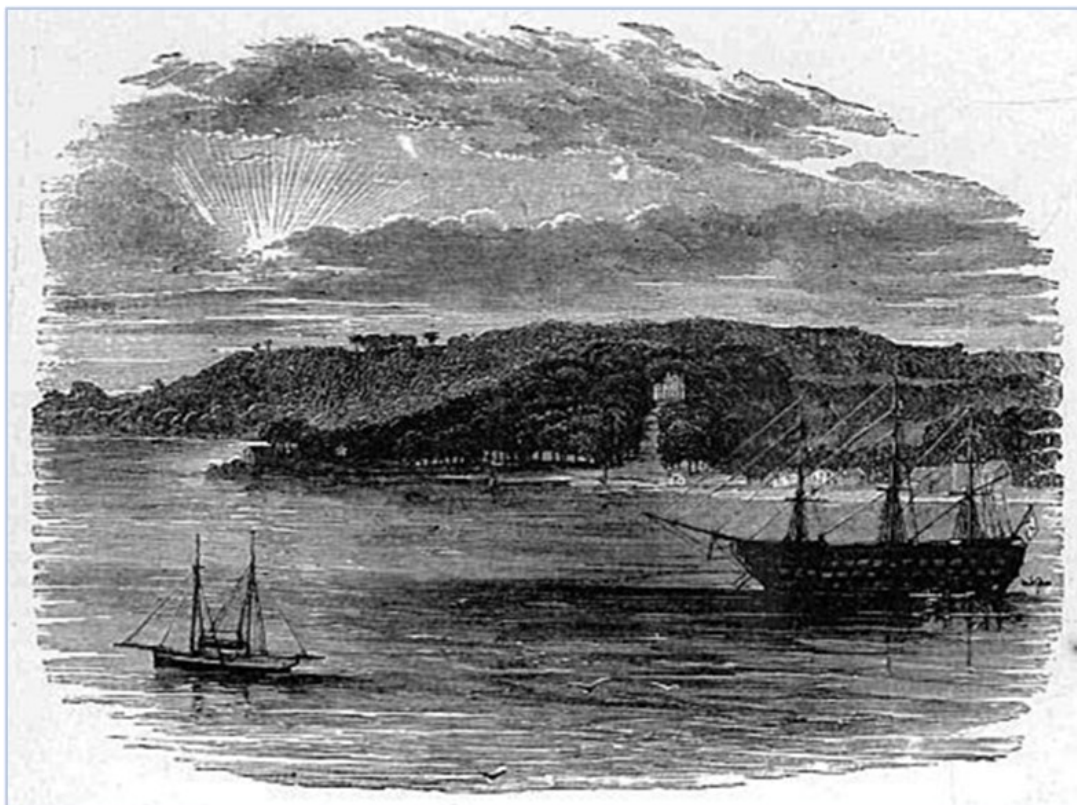
In a dinghy I have always felt more "at one" with the water, the breeze and the vessel. The power of the wind is felt on your face and on the tiller. You are constantly reacting to the balance of the boat and, on top of that, the constant roll of the waves of the sea always makes for an interesting and challenging experience.

I have always been quite competitive at sports and you can't always win, but I do like to try to win and continue to improve with experience.

Dinghy and Cruiser racing offer that chance to enjoy the wind and the sea, combined with the challenge of a competition.

I have talked about coming along to the "Push the boat out" event for a number of years and this year I finally got down to the RHSC for the first race meet since the most recent Covid Lockdown. The race didn't materialise due to the highish wind and lack of sun and warmth. However I did meet a number of welcoming, keen Club Members and have been able to help crew on Andrew's Laser Stratos (makes me think of the "Blue Stratos" advert from years ago, even though the boat has a red hull), Martin's Wayfarer, plus Hugh's lovely Cruiser Helena Ann. Plus, I got out on a Rib to see the Hastings Canoeist's River Clean, a few wallowing seals and experience a quick blast out to sea - very enjoyable !

Being at one with the wind, waves and a lovely Nature reserve environment can't help but put a smile on your face. A lovely Town and environment for just "messaging about on the water" (so far on the water, not IN the water, but give it time ! - I've got a history of falling into the water so keep an eye out for the "Big Splash").



My first boat, when a teenager in the 1950's, was a Lymington Scow. I watched it being built at Phillips Boatyard; the elm planks were steamed in a box, then shaped and fixed with copper rivets. It had a lug sail, and was good at sea but relatively slow, which must have caused frustration for those on the rescue boat!



Derek (at the helm) in the Lymington Scow

My next boat was an Enterprise built by Herbie Phillips, again in Rock Channel. I enjoyed this boat, however the nose dropped on a gybe, so we had to raise the centre-board and get the weight into the stern to avoid capsizing.



Derek's Enterprise (in centre)





The Hornet (see photo left) which had a sliding seat, broke when my father was at full length over the water and in he went! Dad was not amused when I laughed. It was a river race, we were in a handicap race heading up river, and those racing Merlins were coming back having started earlier. Their class was being led by Don Cook. Don scooped Dad up from the water and dropped him off on the bank and went on to win the race!

Then I began racing a Merlin Rocket, a very competitive class at Rye Harbour Sailing Club. My most memorable experience in the Rocket was when I sailed under. We went into a large wave and went down like a submarine – a very strange experience.

My favourite, the 470 racing boat, was fast and stable. I began racing the 470 with my daughter when she was 10 years old, who loved the trapeze. One time, hitting a large wave, Claire lost her footing and swung right out around the forestay, suffering a huge bruise as she crashed in to the bow of the boat on the other side. Fortunately, she was unperturbed, seeming to enjoy the wilder moments having continued to sail after our first race in which we capsized at sea. On another occasion, coming into the entrance of the river Rother, there were steep waves caused by the tide going out and the strong wind blowing inland. This created a "ding ding ding ding" as we planed across the top of the waves.

My last dinghy was a Contender - a beast of a boat (see front cover)! The vendor, from Bexhill advised me that, if it was tipping over, to get over the side rather than fight it. It was a single handler with a trapeze - quite a handful! One has to manage the tiller, the sheet and trapeze. Another issue was that the boom was long and low, which meant that at sea the boom dipped into the waves; I think it was designed for lake sailing. I spent quite a lot of time in the water while racing it!

Now I have a Hunter 490 Sailing Cruiser, inherited from my father. The outboard engine fell off at sea last October 2020. Fortunately it was tied on; I hauled it back up and got it going again! However, it only lasted to get us as far as the wharf; the wind was against us, so I was very glad to get a tow. I do not like having to rely on an outboard engines.

On Saturday May 15 Rye Harbour Sailing Club supported Hastings Canoe Club with a river clean up. Starting at 1100 in the pouring rain it luckily dried up later and turned into a very good day with plenty of sun. It was about 1500 by the time we finished.



The Canoes made it all the way to the Strand but gathered more rubbish when the tide came in and they could get to the tide line where most of the rubbish gathers unfortunately. The RHSC team of Andrew, Claire Powell and Jem and Ali Short did a great job on the shore near the wharf where lots of netting and ropes were pulled out of the mud. Elsbeth Turnbull, Jonathan Dellar, Fran and I were on the Lankelma RIB to gather the rubbish from the pickers and take the rubbish to a skip at the Lankelma yard.



Club members taking part in the shore clean up

There was not too much plastic but mainly netting, ropes, some steel and foam insulation. A great effort by all involved and it was nice to be able to have the club supporting this on our premises. Our reward were the seals popping up here and there -always a great sight. Hastings Canoe Club is thinking of doing another one in the autumn so we will keep you informed.



Fran Zon and Elsbeth Turnbull



Hastings Canoe Club

It has been a hard winter for all sports but, with the Government announcements regarding COVID allowing for sailing to recommence as a sport, the Die Hards of the Rye Harbour Sailing Club looked to go out for a practice sail (the first since November) on 8 April.

Sadly, appalling weather was the order of the day. Members had turned up already dressed in their wetsuits (as recommended so as not to have to use the changing room due to COVID restrictions) but it was very cold and very windy with the odd flurry of horizontal rain to contend with.



Steve Eccles in a Laser Dinghy winds up for the start

**Photographs by Jeremy Short**

After brief moments of 'shall we shan't we'; it was reluctantly decided to give it a miss. Not least because it was realized that going out in extreme conditions after a layoff of five months is not necessarily the safest option; and, if nothing else, Rye Harbour Sailing Club considers itself a safe organization to sail with.

18 April saw the first race of the delayed Summer Series 1 races and was also the delayed Easter Egg race. Conditions were perfect for the first run out of dinghy sailors: fairly light winds and a flattish sea with a light swell allowed sailors to shake out their boats and put right those little niggles that occur after a long layoff. The race was won by Club Commodore Eric Zon with Steve Eccles coming second and Mark Whiteman third. The shops had run out of Easter Eggs by now so first prize was a box of chocolates!

The second race of the series was held on 1 May: John & Claire Powell came first, Martin Newman and Jonathan Dellar second and Andrew & Mary Hewitt third. The conditions on the day meant that the race was able to take place in Rye Bay again – hopefully, this theme will continue for most of the series.

The next race is on 16 May but not before club members are assisting members of Hastings Canoe Club on 15 May with a clean-up of rubbish that has accumulated on the banks of the River Rother.

The Club now has a new website where details of future activity and results are available to see: [rhsc.org.uk](http://rhsc.org.uk)



John & Claire Powell in a RS2000 dinghy beating up from the River Rother



Some of the dinghies jostling at the start line

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Kelly Culver – Online Sales & Marketing Manager

123-125 Snargate Street

Dover

Kent

CT17 9AP

Office +44 (0)1304 248900



*Griffin* was slipped at Camper and Nicholson' yard. One rib had broken and there was considerable damage to the hull planks, which had to be replaced. However, once the original hull's timber are renewed, it tends to be a weak spot. This proved to be the case with *Griffin*.

We continued with our season after three weeks. I remember starting a race off Southsea and taking photos of '*Myth of Malham*', the forerunner of modern offshore racing boats.



Myth of Mylan, the boat which defined the start of modern ocean racing with its new radical design. (Captain John Illingworth)



Later in life *Griffin* was sold and her rig changed to a Bermuda one. She attempted to retrace the steps of the original Viking voyage to discover America. Off Greenland, they developed a bad leak and were in danger of sinking. Eventually, they managed to seek shelter in a Greenland port to carry out repairs and did, eventually, make it to America. She never returned to the UK. A book was written about the voyage.

Left– *Bloodhound* (owned by the Queen and by Prince Philip prior to his death)



## Race to Santander

This started at Brixham. Our skipper was Cutty Mason. He had written a book on heavy weather sailing, which he thought was much better than John Illingworth's account on the same subject. Before the war, he was the senior accountant with a firm building a major project railway in Spain.

He spoke Spanish fluently and even after the 1939-45 war, was the person that the Foreign Office went to for information about the Spanish Civil War.

There was a big party held at the Brixham Yacht Club, which we went to in our reefer jackets and tidy trousers. Not Cutty! He did not go. Instead he spent the time with the Spanish entrants, dressed in his sailing boots, old clothes and with a liberal spread of snuff on his face, as usual.

We duly set out early the next morning in a F5-6 headwind and battered along the coast, passing Lands End and into very large waves, with the wind now F7. We leaked badly as we battled to windward and despite operating two large hand pumps all the time, we lost the fight with the incoming seas.

Cutty decided to abandon the race and retire. There was no alternative, except to sink!



Brixham Harbour About 1865

Once off the wind, water ceased to come aboard as soon as we settled on a broad reach, the boat no longer straining to go to windward.

We returned to Brixham and the crew departed, except for Cutty and myself. The next day, in lightish winds and sunny weather, we departed for Yarmouth IOW. It was one of my most rewarding days afloat. I sailed the boat most of the way, whilst Cutty rewarded me with stories of his life. At the same time he was cooking one of the best meals that I have had afloat. He was a superb cook.

Cutty had skippered Griffin earlier in the summer. He had converted his ordinary portable battery radio to become an excellent direction finder. It was so much better than the Beme Loop and much more accurate.

I came, eventually to depart Griffin and head to London to start my studies at Guys. In my first term, struggling to absorb anatomy, I received notice from the War Office, to return to the Army and be sent to Korea. I explained to them that I was at Guys, attempting to learn anatomy, so they agreed to let me continue until I qualified. By the time that this happened the Korea war was over.

I later learnt that Cutty had died whilst asleep in his bunk, still ocean racing at 85. What a character and I am sure that he died doing what he loved best.

After my time as a bosun, I did a few races as 'mate', but being a member of RORC and finding time and more importantly, money, to remain a member of the RORC proved too much, thus I resigned from the RORC with much regret, but with fond and vivid memories.

## Back to Basics

Still owning Kittiwake, the Solent Seagull, I had joined the Medway Yacht Club.

The hard at the Club had been laid down with concrete 'biscuits' by the Royal Engineers during the war. This meant that there were large grooves between each one.

I had built a launching trolley to accommodate Kittiwake, but, unfortunately, I found that I could not locate any suitable wheels.

I made my entrance to the Club with Susan. Having got the boat on to the trolley, we started to pull her up the slipway. Aptly named!. We were struggling when the owner of a largish yacht and another person, who turned out to be his professional skipper, arrived.

“ Can I give you guys a hand?”

They both started pulling, but the large 'tea trolley' wheels stuck in a groove , the rope, parted, and the yacht's owner subsided into the mud, covering the slipway.



The skipper did not help when he tried to brush the mud off the owner's pearly white trousers.

The owner was, in fact, Carlteon Mitchell, from the USA, who had just won the Fastnet and with the two other American boats, the Admiral's Cup!

He just laughed, but the same could not be said about Commodore of the MYC and the others, who stood on the steps of the Club, as a welcoming party, dressed in all their finery. If looks could kill, I would have been dead!

It was the custom of the American boats to come up and moor at MYC for a short while, before being shipped back to the States.

The days of the Seagull were numbered. Taking part in a race, rather than ride over the waves, she ploughed into them and filled with water. We had to be rescued!

Thus it was the turn of the Hornet.

John, my fellow student friend, sailed at his home town of Brightlingsea and I occasionally used to go with him up to his home.

I crewed for him in his Brightlingsea One Design and realised that John was a top class sailor. His main rival there was Reg White, later an Olympic sailor in catamarans. We also had a National 12 Guy's boat on the Thames and I crewed for John in that. One day I was wearing twelve sweaters and the mainsheet froze to the hull!

John then bought a new boat, a Hornet.

My first Hornet was JACK HORNER, probably not the best of its kind and this was a joint venture with Richard,



Hornets at MYC

who was to become my brother-in-law. We also built a road trailer for the boat.

One day I was towing the boat through Maidstone with a 1937 Morris Ten, given to me by my father, as he had bought a new car. Approaching the traffic lights at the top of the town, where one lane goes straight ahead and the other down a hill towards Sutton Valence, a Bentley tried to force its way into the lane straight ahead. I was not having this and put my foot down on the accelerator, not that this made much difference, but just enough to make the Bentley have to come in behind me. Because of the narrow winding road out of town, the Bentley had to stay behind, Driving the car was Prince Phillip, with the Queen beside him and with Charles and Anne in the back. No security required in those days!

“ My apologies, Your Majesty !”.

Thus we started to go to Open Meetings and even went to the National Championships at Hayling Island, where we distinguished our selves by finishing nearly last!

We sold and bought '*Minotaur*' from Burnham. '*Minotaur*' had had a successful racing record at Burnham and for us, although not being so distinguished, we improved on our performance.

Then followed '*Jack Russell*', constructed in the IOW by Cecil Doe, who had previously built me an excellent Bass Boat for us. For many years, it was used for fishing and family holidays. We kept her for many, many years and was much loved.

Finally '*Turandot*', my last Hornet, was built for me by Reg White.

At the Medway YC, the Hornet fleet was probably the best class that I had sailed in and many of its members became lifelong friends. We enjoyed our racing, but were not cut throat as many clubs were.

We had one of our Open Meetings at the Club. Whereupon a galaxy of smart open cars arrived, with most having rather beautiful girls attached.

At the evening dinner at the Club, one of these visitors stood, amongst the cutlery, on one of the tables and said to the person, properly dressed in 'yachting rig'

*“When Are you serving dinner, my Man”.*

Unfortunately the person, so addressed, was not a steward, but our rather 'touchy' Club Secretary. The Hornets were barred for two years!

Memories of Hornets include:

Crewing for a friend, David, whilst Julia was pregnant. David had entered the World Hornet Championship and needed a crew. This was to be held at Muiden on the Islemeer in Holland.

David and his wife had set off towing '*Black as hell*', whilst I towed another Medway Hornet owned by Ted, who accompanied us together with his crew and guitar, in our Bedford Dormobile.

Firstly I made a mistake at the campsite in Belgium, as the toilet that I used to relieve myself in, was actually not a toilet but a shower and wash room. When I pulled the chain, I became very wet!.

At the start of race proceedings, the Flying Dutchmen started first, followed by the Finns and then the Hornets.

Ted was alongside a Finn, chatting away, when the wind changed direction, so he tacked. Forgetting that he was so close to the Finn, his crew, Tony, threw the seat over, which went straight into the hull of the Finn. They had to return to the club as a two masted catamaran because to separate themselves would probably have allowed the Finn to fill with water.

During one race the visibility became very poor and marker buoys had been placed between each mark of the course in order to aid competitors. It had started to blow up and this caused steep short seas. I was literally washed off the seat but was able to hang on to the jib sheet as we powered along. David was able to haul his sodden crew back on board and on we went. At the mark, which everybody, bar one boat, had rounded, David realised that everyone, except the one boat, had gone round the intermediate buoy, not the correct one and if we continued, we would have finished second. Soaking wet and cold and still with increasing wind, I said that I was not too keen! We returned to base, but still managed to finish 12th, which qualified David to enter the following year's event.

At the reefer jacket party at the Muiden Club, we were able to witness the future BBC yachting correspondent, water skiing past in the nude!

Much more recently, I was sailing in the same area, with the same wind and sea conditions, in a 31 foot Trimaran and felt seasick, something I barely ever do.

After the championships, we set off to Lake Garda, still towing Ted's Hornet.

At our campsite, Ted 'fell' for a rather attractive Italian girl and asked her if she would like a sail in the Hornet. She seemed keen, so the three of us set off to show her the ropes, so to speak and this all went well. Then it was time for them to go off alone.

Ted had a non-lifting rudder, unlike most of us and one had to remove the rudder, before coming ashore and this I did, as usual. Ted, so keen to sail off with the girl, shot off, but without the rudder! Unable to steer, they landed on the opposite of the lake, the rigging, catching on a barbed wire promontory.

I had my 10ft carvel sailing dinghy and with this I set out with the rudder and we managed to free the Hornet from the barbed wire. As for the girl, she had departed, having had enough of the Englishman and his boat!!

We had several more years with the Hornet, but with Mac's over six foot body not always in the right place, thus causing many capsizes, I bought a Flying Fifteen -*Freckles* –an early fibreglass variant, built on the IOW.

An early race saw us sitting on bottom of the upturned hull, with the mast firmly embedded the mud and me shouting-

*“Does anyone want to buy a Fifteen?”* to anyone passing! At least a Hornet would have been easier to right.

*Freckles* was true to her name and grew 'freckles', except I then learnt that the boat had osmosis.

In the winter we ground off the hull's imperfections, painted the bottom and anti-fouled.

She was sold to a dentist who sailed on Grafham Water. Mac and I had replaced the self bailer but, somehow during the task, we unwittingly fixed it back to front. The result was that when the new owner sailed and pushed the bailer down, water flooded in, not out (sorry about that!).

I instructed the new owner that the screw holding the rudder needed to be tightened each time before sailing. This he did not do and the rudder fell to the bottom of the reservoir. He was not a 'happy bunny' when I spoke to him, whilst crewing for a friend at an Open Meeting there. Actually, rather a design fault, I thought!

Next in the stable was Fenian, who I found was for sale in Ramsgate. She was a wooden Chippendale boat that had been much neglected. During the winter we sanded down the foredeck to the bare wood, varnished the whole boat with many coats of varnish and we were ready.

Another boat of the same vintage was owned by Ralph Wadham and was named 'Yandy'. As he owned 'Yachts and Yachting', you will see why.

We had next door numbers, used the same type of sails and I tuned our boat the same way.

He nearly always beat us hollow! I could not understand why. The boats seemed identical. Then one Sunday, Ralph asked me if I would like to sail her. This I did, sailed as I usually do and won with ease.

In retrospect, I believe that keeping Yandy in a heated greenhouse all winter, may have been the answer.

Mac and I entered the National Championships one year, to be sailed at Helensburgh, on the Clyde. Never before or since, have I enjoyed such lavish hospitality.

Languishing towards the back of the fleet, were two chaps from Northern Ireland, who jokingly kept shouting “*You F.....Fenians*”. Then it dawned on us what Fenian meant.

Weather in June was so hot, with little wind, that we lay in the bottom of the boat, soaking up the sun, whilst waiting for the wind to fill and start racing. Julia, meanwhile, at home in Kent, turned on the central heating.

Then came the Nationals at Hayling Island.

It blew so hard that some of the Fifteens broke their moorings overnight, ours included. Eventually going out in a substantial boat, driven by Bruce Banks, we found our two Medway boats about a mile away, happily upright and together, with absolutely no damage!. Only the stern section remained of one boat, on the far shore at the mouth of the harbour.

Next an Open meeting on Rutland Water.

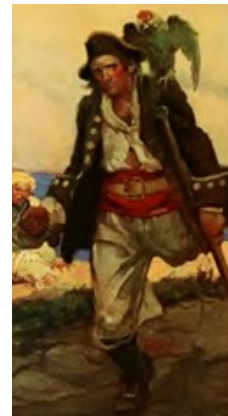
For once we were doing well as one of the four leading boats. Then 'Bang', the boom had broken in two. It fell over the side, with the mainsail torn away from the mast and finding solace under the keel, the boat filling with water. The rescue boat eventually came to our aid, pumped out the water and towed us home.

*“How could, even you, nearly sink on a pond?”*, we were bombarded with on our return to the Medway. Quite easily in a F6!



## Wanted– articles for the Jolly Roger!

If you would like to share any sailing experiences or your expertise with our readership or simply make a comment, your articles or letters to the editor will be gratefully received and considered for inclusion in a subsequent edition of the Jolly Roger. We aim to maintain a balance between material relating to dinghy sailing and cruisers and also between articles which are informative, educational or downright comical and so please do not be offended if an article you contribute does not appear immediately. Articles or letters should be submitted to the editor (apowell@lawdisputes.co.uk) no later than 14 days before the publication date (i.e. by 16th November for the Winter edition, 14th February for the Spring edition, 17th May for the Summer edition and 17th August for the Autumn edition).



## An Old Sea Shanty

supplied by Anna Knight

*When I was a little lad  
And so my mother told me,  
Way, haul away, we'll haul away Joe,  
That if I did not kiss a gal  
My lips would grow all moldy,  
Way, haul away, we'll haul away Joe.  
Way, haul away, we'll haul for better weather,  
Way, haul away, we'll haul away Joe.*

*King Louis was the King of France  
Before the Revolution,  
Way, haul away, we'll haul away Joe,  
King Louis got his head cut off  
Which spoiled his constitution.  
Way, haul away, we'll haul away Joe.  
Way, haul away, we'll haul for better weather,  
Way, haul away, we'll haul away Joe.*

*Oh the cook is in the galley  
Making duff so handy  
Way, haul away, we'll haul away Joe,  
And the captain's in his cabin  
Drinkin' wine and brandy  
Way, haul away, we'll haul away Joe.  
Way, haul away, we'll haul for better weather,  
Way, haul away, we'll haul away Joe*

According to Stan Hugill, this is a famous tack and sheet shanty. Because of the many verses (he lists 20) he believes it may have been used as a halyard song (sheet shanties were usually no longer than three or four verses). Sometimes the word "pull" or "haul" was used instead of Joe.

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1. Download an application form from our website: <http://www.rhsc.org.uk/Membership>
2. Refer to the notes on page 3 of the form and decide which category of membership is appropriate for you or your family and complete the form accordingly
3. Calculate the fee payable based on the notes on page 3 (including any berthing fee)
4. Either:  
  
Send a scanned copy of the completed form by email to the Membership secretary, John Powell OBE (RHSCMembership@gmail.com). Fees are only paid once membership is confirmed. Bank transfer is preferred; details are:  
  
Sort code: 30-90-28 Account No. 00752410 (Rye Harbour Sailing Club) quoting your surname as the reference.
5. Alternatively you may send a paper copy of the form to:

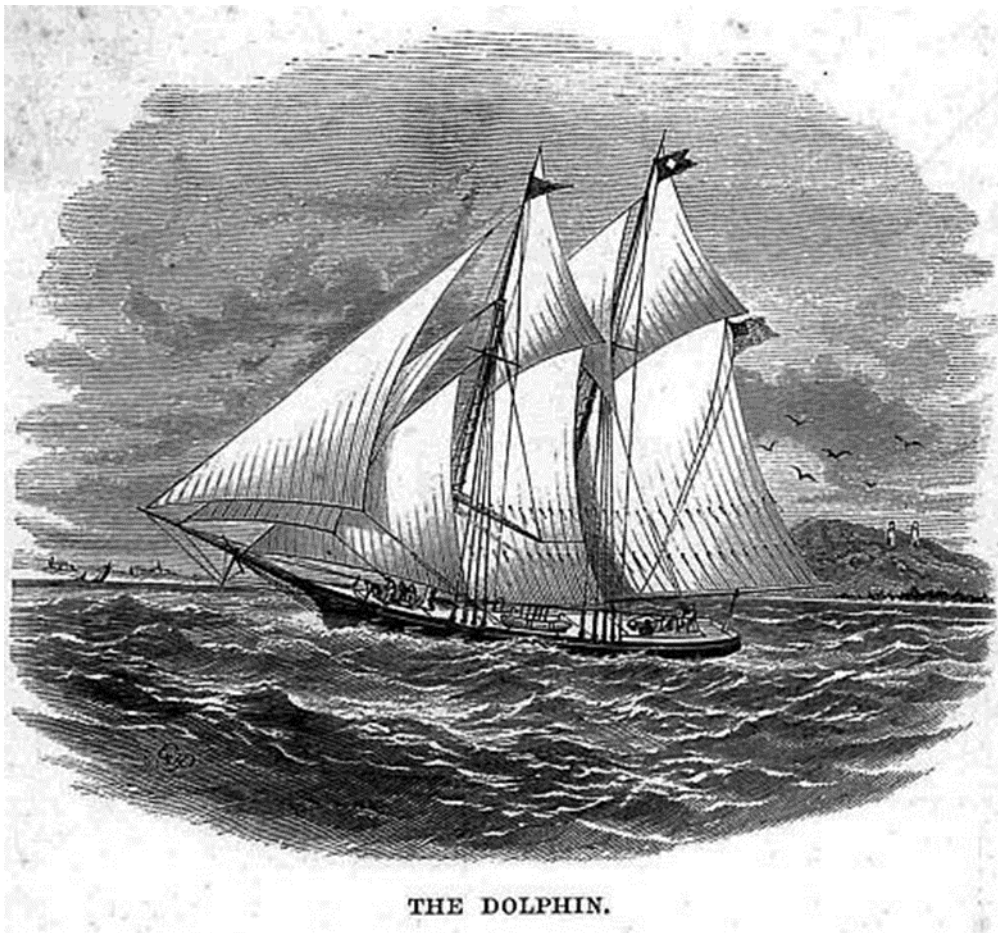
John Powell OBE  
Membership Secretary  
Rye Harbour Sailing Club  
The Point  
Rye Harbour  
East Sussex  
TN31 7TU

(Please note that sending a paper copy is not the fastest method of processing membership applications).

If you have any questions during the process then please contact John Powell at: RHSCMembership@gmail.com

6. Once your application has been processed John Powell (and, if relevant, the Berthing Master, Jeremy Short) will contact you.

We now hauled up for Portsmouth Harbour. Far off, on the summit of the green heights of Portsdown Hill, we could see the obelisk-shaped monument to Nelson, an appropriate landmark in sight of the last spot of English ground on which he stepped before sailing to fight the great battle of Trafalgar, where he fell. We could also trace the outline of a portion of the cordon of forts—twenty miles in length—from Langston Harbour on the east to Stokes' Bay on the west. Along the shores, on both sides of the harbour, are two lines of fortifications; so that even should a hostile fleet manage to get by the cheese-like forts, they would still find it a hard matter to set fire to the dockyard or blow up the *Victory*. That noble old ship met our sight as, passing between Point Battery and Block House Fort, we entered the harbour.



She did not look so big as I expected, for not far off was the *Duke of Wellington*, which seemed almost large enough to hoist her on board; and nearer to us, at the entrance of Haslar Creek, was the gallant old *Saint Vincent*, on board which papa once served when he was a midshipman. We looked at her with great respect, I can tell you. Think how old she must be. She has done her duty well,—she has carried the flag of England many a year, and now still does her duty by serving as a ship in which boys are trained for the Royal Navy.

Further up, in dim perspective, we saw ships with enormous yellow-painted hulls; noble ships they were, with names allied to England's naval glory. They were all, however, far younger than the *Saint Vincent*, as we discovered by seeing the apertures in their stern-posts formed to admit screws.

Shortening sail, we came to an anchor not far from the *Saint Vincent*, among several other yachts. On the Gosport side we could see across the harbour, away to the dockyard, off the quays of which were clustered

a number of black monsters of varied form and rig. Papa said—though otherwise we could not have believed it—“*that there were amongst them some of the finest ships of the present navy.*” I could hardly fancy that such ships could go to sea, for they are more like gigantic coal barges with strong erections on their decks, than anything else afloat.

Of course I cannot tell you all our adventures consecutively, so shall describe only some of the most interesting. We first visited the *Saint Vincent*, which, as we had just left our little yacht, looked very fine and grand. Papa was saying to one of the officers that he had served on board her, when a weather-beaten petty officer came up, and with a smile on his countenance touched his hat, asking if papa remembered Tom Trueman. Papa immediately exclaimed, “*Of course I do,*” and gave him such a hearty grip of the hand that it almost made the tears come into the old man’s eyes with pleasure, and they had a long yarn about days of yore.



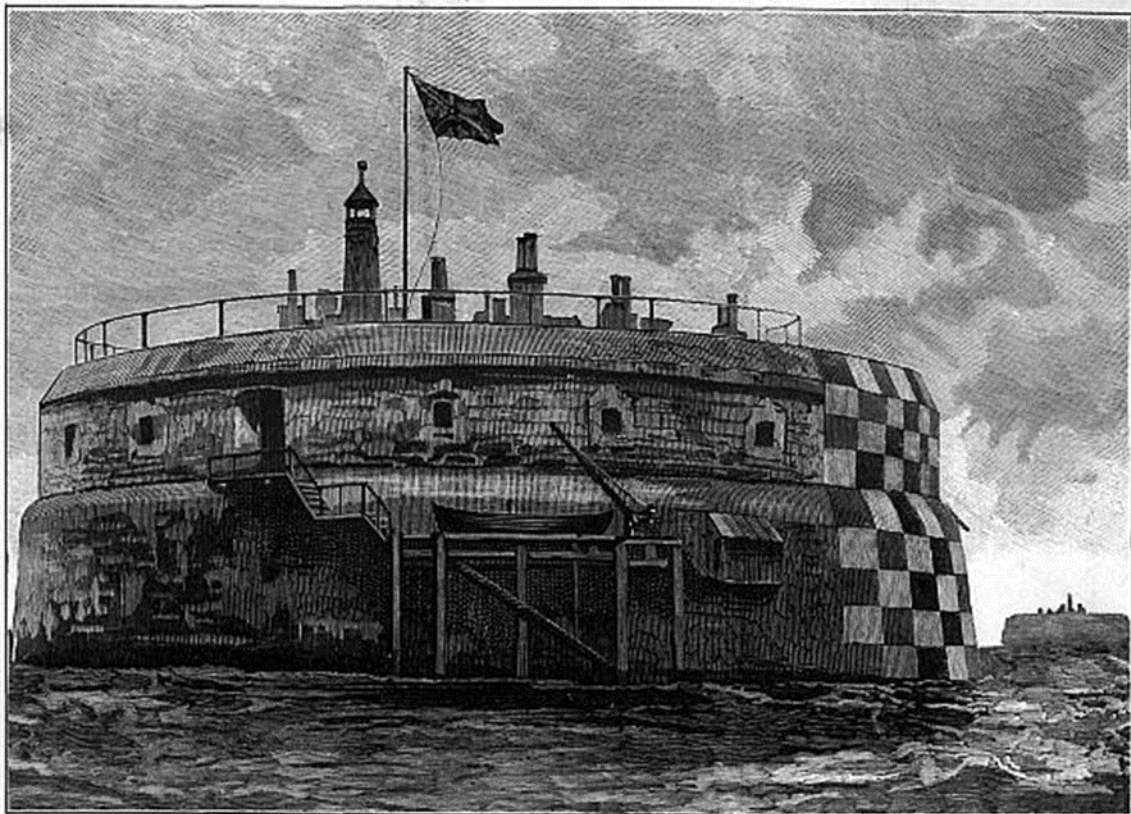
After this papa met many old shipmates. It was pleasant to see the way in which he greeted them and they greeted him, showing how much he must have been beloved, which, of course, he was; and I’ll venture to say it will be a hard matter to find a kinder or better man. I’m sure that he is a brave sailor, from the things he has done, and the cool way in which he manages the yacht, whatever is happening.

After we had finished with the *Saint Vincent* we went on board the *Victory*, which looks, outside, as sound as ever she did—a fine, bluff old ship; but when we stepped on her deck, even we were struck by her ancient appearance, very unlike the *Saint Vincent*, and still more unlike the *Duke of Wellington*.

There was wonderfully little ornamental or brass work of any sort; and the stanchions, ladders, and railings were all stout and heavy-looking.

Of course we looked with respect on the brass plate on her deck which marks the spot where Nelson fell. We then went far down into the midshipmen’s berth, in the cockpit. How dark and gloomy it seemed; and yet it was here Nelson, while the guns were thundering overhead, lay dying. How very different from the mess-rooms of young officers of the present day! Here another inscription, fixed on the ship’s side, pointed out where the hero breathed his last. Going into the cabin on the main deck, we saw one of the very topsails—riddled with shot—which had been at Trafalgar. After being shifted at Gibraltar, it had been for more than half a century laid up in a store at Woolwich, no one guessing what a yarn that old roll of canvas could tell.

Late in the evening we crossed the harbour to the dockyard, where papa wanted to pay a visit. A curious steam ferry-boat runs backwards and forwards between Portsmouth and Gosport. We passed a number of large ships coated with thick plates of iron; but even the thickest cannot withstand the shots sent from some of the guns which have been invented, and all might be destroyed by torpedoes. We could hardly believe that some of the ships we saw were fit to go to sea. The most remarkable was the *Devastation*. Her free-board—that is, the upper part of her sides—is only a few feet above the water. Amidships rises a round structure supporting what is called “a hurricane-deck.” This is the only spot where the officers and men can stand in a sea-way. At either end is a circular revolving turret containing two thirty-five ton guns, constructed to throw shot of seven hundred pounds. These guns are worked by means of machinery.



THE FORTS AT SPITHEAD.

Pulling down the harbour on the Gosport side, to be out of the way of passing vessels, we soon reached the yacht, feeling very tired, for we had been wide awake for the last sixteen hours. As we sat in our little cabin, it was difficult to realise that outside of us were so many objects and scenes of interest connected with the naval history of England. Papa told us a number of curious anecdotes. Not many hundred yards from us, about a century ago, was to be seen a gibbet on Block House Point, at the west entrance of the harbour, on which hung the body of a man called Jack the Painter. Having taken it into his very silly head that he should forward the cause of freedom by burning the dockyard, he set fire to the rope-house, which was filled with hemp, pitch, and tar. Jack, having performed this noble deed, escaped from the yard, and was making his way along the Fareham Road, when, having asked a carter to give him a lift, he pointed out the cloud of smoke rising in the distance, observing that he “guessed where it came from.” The carter went his way; but shortly afterwards, when a hue and cry was raised, he recollected his passenger, who was traced, captured, tried, and executed.

**In the Solent.**

Next morning, soon after breakfast, we went on shore to pay a visit to the dockyard. On entering, papa was desired to put down his name; and the man seeing that he was a captain in the navy, we were allowed to go on without a policeman in attendance, and nearly lost ourselves among the storehouses and docks. As we walked past the lines of lofty sheds, we heard from all directions the ringing clank of iron, instead of, as in days of yore, the dull thud of the shipwright's mallet, and saw the ground under each shed strewed with ribs and sheets of iron ready to be fixed to the vast skeletons within. Papa could not help sighing, and saying that he wished "the days of honest sailing ships could come back again." However, he directly afterwards observed, "I should be sorry to get back, at the same time, the abuses, the wild doings, and the profligacy which then prevailed. Things have undoubtedly greatly improved, though they are bad enough even now."

Tramways and railways, with steam locomotives, run in all directions. Formerly, papa said, the work was done by yellow-coated convicts with chains on their legs. They have happily been removed from the dockyard itself, and free labourers only are employed. Convicts, however, are still employed in various extensive public works.

Leaving the block house, we went to the smithy, where we saw Nasmyth's steam hammer, which does not strike like a hammer, but comes down between two uprights. On one side is a huge furnace for heating the material to be subjected to the hammer. Papa asked the manager to place a nut under it, when down came the hammer and just cracked the shell. He then asked for another to be placed beneath the hammer, when it descended and made but a slight dent in the nut.

Soon afterwards a huge mass of iron, to form an anchor, was drawn out of the furnace; then down came the hammer with thundering strokes, beating and battering it until it was forced into the required shape, while the sparks flying out on all sides made us retreat to a safer distance.

One of the largest buildings in the dockyard is the foundry, which is considered the most complete in the world. We looked into the sheds, as they are called, where the boilers for the ships are constructed, and could scarcely hear ourselves speak, from the noise of hammers driving in the rivets. Many of the boilers were large enough to form good-sized rooms. We walked along the edge of the steam basin. It is nine hundred feet long and four hundred broad. The ships, I should have said, are built on what are called the building slips, which are covered over with huge roofs of corrugated iron, so that the ships and workmen are protected while the building is going forward.

Before leaving we went into the mast-house, near the entrance to the yard. Here we saw the enormous pieces of timber intended to be built into masts—for masts of large ships are not single trees, but composed of many pieces, which are bound together with stout iron hoops. Here also were the masts of ships in ordinary.

They would be liable to decay if kept on board exposed to the weather. Each mast and yard is marked with the name of the ship to which it belongs. The masts of the old *Victory* are kept here, the same she carried at Trafalgar. Not far off is the boat-house, where boats from a large launch down to the smallest gig are kept ready for use.

A light breeze from the eastward enabled us to get under weigh just at sunrise, and to stem the tide still making into the harbour. Sometimes, however, we scarcely seemed to go ahead, as we crept by Block House Fort and Point Battery on the Portsmouth side.



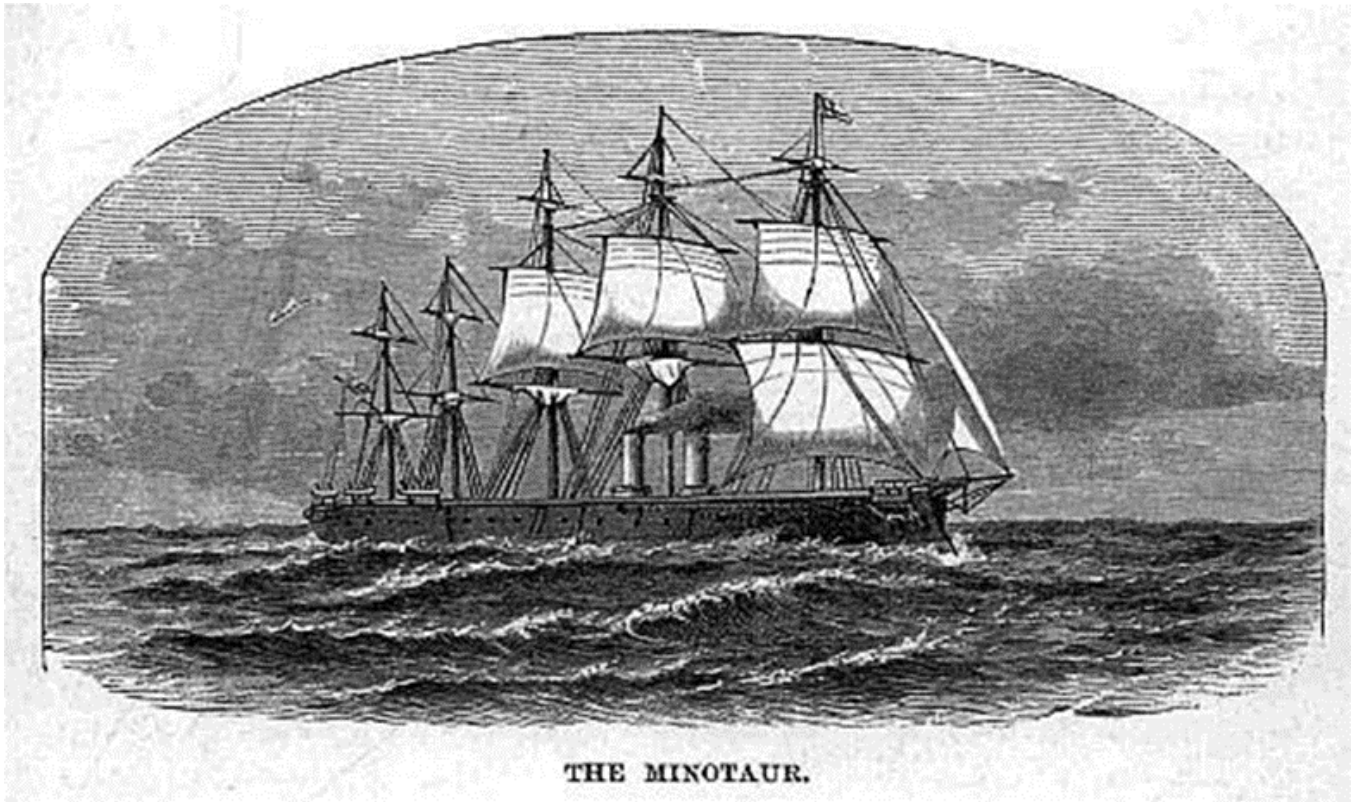
A recent view of Block House Fort

Once upon a time, to prevent the ingress of an enemy's fleet, a chain was stretched across the harbour's mouth. We had got just outside the harbour when we saw a man-of-war brig under all sail standing in. A beautiful sight she was, her canvas so white, her sides so polished!—on she stood, not a brace nor tack slackened. Papa looked at her with the affection of an old sailor. It was an object which reminded him of his younger days. "You don't see many like her now," he observed. Presently, as she was starting by us, a shrill whistle was heard. Like magic the sails were clewed up, the hands, fine active lads—for she was a training vessel—flew aloft, and lay out on the yards. While we were looking, the sails were furled; and it seemed scarcely a moment afterwards when we saw her round to and come to an anchor not far from the *Saint Vincent*. "*That's how I like to see things done,*" said papa. "*I wish we had a hundred such craft afloat; our lads would learn to be real seamen!*"

He and Paul were so interested in watching the brig, that for the moment their attention was wholly absorbed. As we got off the Southsea pier we began to feel the wind coming over the common; and being able to make better way, quickly glided by the yachts and small vessels anchored off it, when we stood close to one of those round towers I have described, and then on towards Spithead.

Spithead is so called because it is at the end of a spit or point of sand which runs off from the mainland. We passed close over the spot where the *Royal George*, with nine hundred gallant men on board, foundered in August, 1782. She was the flag-ship of Admiral Kempenfeldt. He was at the time writing in his cabin, where he was last seen by the captain of the ship, who managed to leap out of a stern port and was saved, as was the late Sir Philip Durham, port-admiral of Portsmouth, then one of the junior lieutenants.

The accident happened from the gross negligence and obstinacy of one of the lieutenants. In order to get at a water-cock on the starboard side, the ship had been heeled down on her larboard side, by running her guns over until the lower deck port-sills were just level with the water. Some casks of rum were being hoisted on board from a lighter, bringing the ship still more over. The carpenter, seeing the danger, reported it to the lieutenant of the watch, who at first obstinately refused to listen to him. A second time he went to the officer, who, when too late, turned the hands up to right ship, intending to run the guns back into their former places.



THE MINOTAUR.

The weight of five or six hundred men, however, going over to the larboard side completely turned the hitherto critically balanced scale; and the ship went right over, with her masts in the water. The sea rushing through her ports quickly filled her, when she righted and went down, those who had clambered through the ports on her starboard side being swept off. Two hundred out of nine hundred alone were saved. Among these was a mid-shipman only nine years old, and a little child found fastened on to the back of a sheep swimming from the wreck. He could not tell the names of his parents, who must have perished, and only knew that his name was Jack, so he was called John Lamb. None of his relatives could be found, and a subscription was raised and people took care of him, and having received a liberal education, he entered an honourable profession.

The ships at Spithead now are of a very different appearance from those formerly seen there. Among them was the *Minotaur*, which, in consequence of her great length, is fitted with five masts. Just as we were passing her she got under weigh, papa said, in very good style; and certainly, when all her canvas was set, she looked a fine powerful sea-going craft. The *Devastation* came out of the harbour, and stood on towards Saint Helen's. She certainly looked as unlike our notions of a man-of-war as anything could be, though, as Paul Truck observed, "she would crumple up the *Minotaur* in a few minutes with her four thirty-five ton guns, powerful as the five-masted ship appears."

Though she looked only fit for harbour work, Paul said that she had been out in heavy weather, and proved a fair sea-boat. The only place that people live on, when not below, is the hurricane-deck. In this centre structure are doorways which can be closed at sea. They lead down into the cabins below, as well as to the hurricane-deck, out of which rise the two funnels and an iron signal-mast. This is thick enough to enable a person to ascend through its inside to a crow's-nest on the top, which serves as a look-out place. From it also projects the davits for hoisting up the boats. On the hurricane-deck stands the captain's fighting-box, cased with iron. Here also is the steering apparatus and wheel. When in action, all the officers and men would be sent below except the helmsmen, who are also protected, with the captain and a lieutenant, and the men inside the turrets working the guns. These are so powerful that they can penetrate armour six inches thick at the distance of nearly three miles.

We brought-up for a short time at the end of Ryde Pier, as papa wished to go on shore to the club. The pier-head was crowded with people who had come there to enjoy the sea-breeze without the inconvenience of being tossed about in a vessel. The town rises on a steep hill from the shore, with woods on both sides, and looks very picturesque. To the west is the pretty village of Binstead, with its church peeping out among the trees.

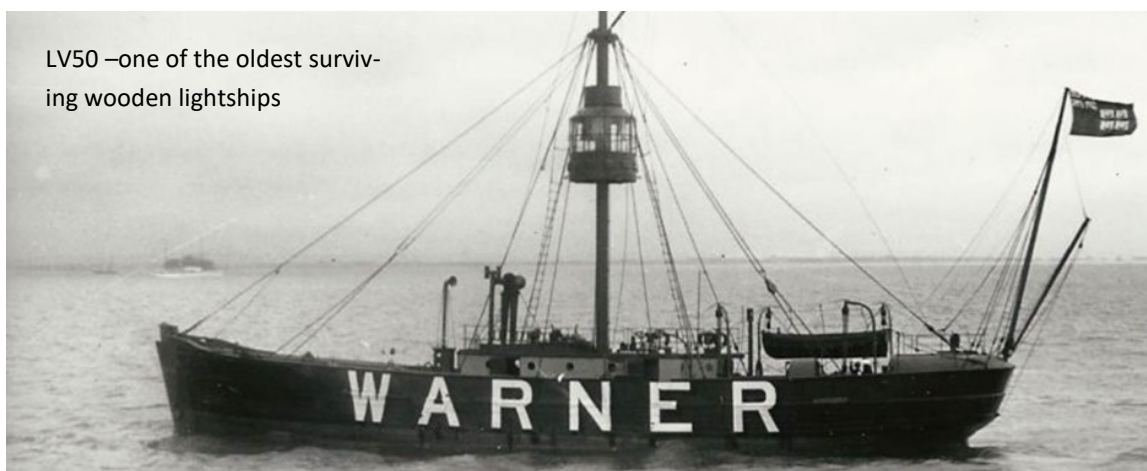
We were very glad, however, when papa came on board, and we got under weigh to take a trip along the south coast of the island. The wind and tide suiting, we ran along the edge of the sand-flats, which extend off from the north shore, passing a buoy which Paul Truck said was called "*No Man's Land.*" Thence onwards, close by the Warner lightship.

As we wanted to see a lightship, the yacht was hove-to, and we went alongside in the boat. She was a stout, tub-like, Dutch-built-looking vessel, with bow and stern much alike, and rising high out of the water, which is very necessary, considering the heavy seas to which she is at times exposed. The master, who knew Paul Truck, was very glad to see us, and at once offered to show us all over the vessel.

The light was in a sort of huge lantern, now lowered on deck; but at night it is hoisted to the top of the mast, thirty-eight feet above the water, so that it can be seen at a distance of eight miles. It is what is called a reflecting light. I will try and describe it.

Within the lantern are a certain number of lights and reflectors, each suspended on gimbals, so that they always maintain their perpendicular position, notwithstanding the rolling of the vessel. Each of these lights consists of a copper lamp, placed in front of a saucer-shaped reflector. The lamp is fed by a cistern of oil at the back of the reflector. This being a revolving light, a number of reflectors were fixed to the iron sides of a quadrangular frame, and the whole caused to revolve once every minute by means of clockwork.

LV50 –one of the oldest surviving wooden lightships





The reflectors on each side of the revolving frame—eight in number—are thus successively directed to every point in the horizon; and the combined result of their rays form a flash of greater or less duration, according to the rapidity of their revolution. In the fixed lights eight lamps and reflectors are used, and are arranged in an octagonal lantern; they do not differ much in appearance from the others.

Standing on, we passed close to the Bembridge or Nab Light-vessel. This vessel carries two bright fixed lights, one hoisted on each of her masts, which can be seen at night ten miles off, and of course it can be distinguished from the revolving Warner light. Farther off to the West, at the end of a shoal extending off Selsea Bill, is another lightship, called the Owers. Having rounded Bembridge Ledge, we stood towards the white Culver cliffs, forming the north side of Sandown Bay, with lofty downs rising above Bembridge. Near their summits are lines of fortifications, extending westward to where once stood Sandown Castle,.....



THE UNDERCLIFF.

Standing across the bay, we came off a very picturesque spot, called Shanklin Chine, a deep cut or opening in the cliffs with trees on both sides. Dunnose was passed, and the village of Bonchurch and Ventnor, climbing up the cliffs from its sandy beach. We now sailed along what is considered the most beautiful part of the Isle of Wight,—the Undercliff. This is a belt of broken, nearly level ground, more or less narrow, beyond which the cliffs rise to a considerable height, with valleys intervening; the downs in some places appearing above them.

It now came on to blow very fresh. There was not much sea in the offing; but, owing to the way the tide ran and met the wind, the bottom being rocky, the water nearer the shore was tossed about in a most curious and somewhat dangerous fashion, for several “lumps of sea,” as

Truck called them, came flop down on our deck; and it was easy to see what might be the consequences if an open boat had attempted to pass through the Race. Paul told us that good-sized vessels had been seen to go down in similar places. One off Portland is far worse than this in heavy weather.....

It was dark before we reached the Nab; but steering by the lights I have described, we easily found our way towards the anchorage off Ryde. At length we sighted the bright light at the end of the pier, and we kept it on our port-bow until we saw before us a number of twinkling lights hoisted on board the yachts at anchor. It was necessary to keep a very sharp look-out, as we steered our way between them, until we came to an anchorage off the western end of the pier.



## INTERESTED IN BECOMING A MEMBER OF THE RYA?

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The RYA is the leading representative for those involved in boating and helps protect and advance the interests of sailors at both national and local levels. With more than 1500 affiliated clubs the RYA sets and maintains recognised standards for training for both leisure and commercial boating through a network of more than 2,400 RYA Recognised Training Centres across 58 countries. The RYA is also responsible for one of the UK's most successful Olympic medal winning sports and its coaching and development schemes actively support 800 of our country's top sailors, from talented juniors to Olympic and World champions.

Although Rye Harbour Sailing Club is an RYA affiliated club this does not mean that you are automatically a member of the RYA! The benefits of being an RYA member include access to:

specialist cruising, legal and technical boating advice from RYA in-house experts;

exclusive offers and discounts from over 80 member reward partners, from clothing, personal and boat equipment, to the latest technology, holidays and travel, insurance, magazine subscriptions and boat show tickets, helping you keep down the cost of your boating;

all the latest news and information via the RYA Magazine, website or direct to your inbox with a host of eNewsletters.

Our club is now a joining point for the RYA. If you join through us the Club will receive a financial benefit by way of commission. You can join through the Club by one of the following methods:

By completing an RYA Application form which will shortly be available at the Clubhouse and returning it to the RYA;

By Phone – by calling the RYA's Member Services team on 023 8060 4159 who will happily talk through the benefits of becoming an RYA Member. Don't forget you will need to quote the Club's Joining Point number (008101027) to ensure the Club benefits from your application.

Online at [www.rya.org.uk/go/join](http://www.rya.org.uk/go/join) by selecting your reason for joining as 'Joining Point' and you will then be prompted to enter the Club's joining point number.