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Liverpool Sailing Club
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Quarterly Review

July 2023

Editor: Oliver Shaw



PICTURED: A RECENT VISIT TO HMS BELFAST WHICH IS MOORED ON THE THAMES BY TOWER BRIDGE, LONDON.

Hove-to

BY OLIVER SHAW

As we are now officially into meteorological summer as I write this, recently past the longest day, and just coming out of (another) heat wave, I trust that many of you are having a good season on the water.

I must admit that for the last month and a half I have been sailing a desk, in the form of marking exam papers, so my own main sailing season will have a late start; towards the end of July I go down to Pembrokeshire for the GP14 National Cruising Week, and then in August I take *A Capella* to Norfolk. In the course of that trip I will be returning her to her current custodian, my godson, after having had her back on loan for the last 12 months.

For the second successive year, this looks like being primarily a dinghy year, for various reasons - some of which are enjoyable ones, and with *Tarka II* not yet back in commission because at the crucial time of Fitting Out *A Capella* took priority.

I did get one mid-week sail in her during the Spring, when I discovered the hard way just how hard it can be when single-handed and with no shore assistance available to get her back onto her

launching trolley in modest winds on a dead lee shore; the difficulty is to wade the trolley deep enough while also lining up the boat despite the wind trying to blow her out of line and ashore. Age 80 doesn't exactly help in such situations; at least that is my excuse, since I don't remember ever having such difficulties in previous years.

The focus of the articles inside this edition is predominantly cruising, maintenance, general nautical knowledge, and seamanship, but I hope there will be something there to interest all sections of the membership. But we repeat a reminder also from this time last year that if you would like articles on other topics, including club activities, you are very welcome to supply copy, and we will endeavour to include it!

All that remains is to wish you a good second half to the season, and indeed now that I am almost clear of this summer's professional commitments I very much hope to be down at the club rather more myself, and sailing, in what is left of the year; I might even manage to get *Tarka II* briefly into the water at some point in August. Have a good season.

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CUMBRIAN CRUISE

PART FOUR

On the Thursday morning, August 14th, I judged that the varnish on the replacement tiller was hard enough for me to put the fittings back on, so I duly did so and then caught a late morning train back up to Ravenglass. I was guilty of very slightly rushing the job, in that the varnish would have been better left for a full week to properly harden, but in the circumstances this was an acceptable economy with the time.

Although it was nothing less than fully expected, it was nonetheless a slight relief as the train pulled in to Ravenglass to see the boat happily floating, and more or less where I had left her!

However I later learned that she had in fact nonetheless moved during my absence, not during the horrendous gales but during the calmer weather which had followed, and had fouled another moored yacht, although fortunately with no damage to either boat; the other boat's owner, who is also a local part time fisherman (his day job is as a ship's engineer), had re-anchored her for me.

Very clearly she had dragged the kedge; but what was an immense puzzle, not solved until the following year, was that in comparatively light winds she had also dragged the Rocna.

As soon as the tide dropped sufficiently for her to dry out I was able to go aboard and fit the new tiller.

That was when I discovered that my anchoring arrangement had been altered, although the reason did not become apparent until a day or so later.

I discovered the likely answer to the conundrum quite by chance the

following year. As a result of twice suffering a fouled anchor in my early years with this same boat I had taken to always setting a trip line, as standard.

Then in 2015, the summer after this adventure in Ravenglass, having anchored overnight at Instow (North Devon) in a drying berth on a clean sandy bottom in little or no wind I was amazed to wake up in the morning foul of another boat, after dragging the anchor.

What had happened was that she had lain tide-rod on the ebb and had dried out as normal, but the trip line had ended up streaming aft along the line of the hull.

Then on the flood the trip buoy and line had been carried forward up the other side of the hull, whereupon the line had got trapped between transom and rudder.

The result was inevitable; when the yacht lifted and was carried forward on the flood the line pulled through this gap until further movement was stopped by the trip buoy, **Then, of course, the trip line did the job it was designed to do and pulled out the anchor!**

Nowadays I no longer set a trip line unless I am expecting to need it; and if I do set it then I monitor what happens to it.



The new tiller fitted

However the respite from the gales proved to be only brief, and in the aftermath of Hurricane Bertha we had a succession of full gales and Strong Wind Warnings for most of the rest of the month. Immediately on my arrival back with the replacement tiller there were new Strong Wind Warnings, continuing for the next several days, and a full gale on Sunday 17th. Monday 18th through to Wednesday 20th all opened with flat calm and sunshine in the estuary, but with Strong Wind Warnings in the forecast, and in each case the wind progressively built up during the day.

The deck log records that the Wednesday was typical; the forecast wind strength was just acceptable for a course off the wind, but not to windward; the only places to go on that forecast were back to Piel Island or alternatively Glasson Dock, and I did not feel ready for either just yet.

Overall I ended up being holed up in Ravenglass for more than a fortnight; from Thursday 7th, when I arrived, until I was eventually able to depart on Saturday 23rd August.

Of course I had originally gone there very deliberately and intentionally, for the walking (and also the very attractive narrow gauge steam railway), and if one has to be storm bound in port then Ravenglass is a very pleasant place for it.

However it is seriously challenged in terms of replenishing stocks; there is (or at least was at that time) virtually nothing to be had at all either in the village or within sensible walking distance.

I was greatly helped by DCA member Jerry Evans, who had contacted me in advance to say that he lived only 30 miles north of Whitehaven, and that it would be

good to meet, and also offering any help needed. On the Sunday he drove over to see me, bringing 10 litres of petrol, which to my surprise was slightly more than sufficient to fill the tank; I had expected to have used rather more than that.

Then he ferried me into Whitehaven for a visit to the supermarket to restock with provisions. That left only gas running low, which we were unable to obtain easily in Whitehaven, but Ravenglass is blessed with a good rail service and a trip to Barrow the following day sorted that out.

That apart, I had intended at outset to do some walking there, and in the event did far more than I had originally envisaged.

However my septuagenarian legs were not reticent in telling me that I was no longer thirty, so the walks actually undertaken were less challenging than I would have chosen forty years earlier!

Nonetheless some of them were quite challenging enough; on one day I did a "Steam & Ramble", taking the train up to the railhead and then doing the walk back, and although enjoyable the "ramble" part of it nearly creased me!

Another good walk was up Wainwright's "secret valley" of Mitredale from Ravenglass, described by him as the "sweetest" of all such Lakeland places, roughly parallel to the railway track but without slavishly following it, as far as Eskdale Green, where the track crosses from Mitredale into Eskdale, and then the train back.



The gauge is indeed 15 inches, or at least thereabouts, so I am happy to accept the statement.

One adult human foot, clad in a comfortably sized walking boot, is a slack fit between the rails.

Scenery and railway apart, I also made a point of patronising each of the various eating establishments in the village; two cafés, two pubs, and a hotel; some of them indeed more than once. My excuse, if any were needed, is that when I visit a holiday area as a holiday-maker but provide my own accommodation I nonetheless recognise that the local economy relies heavily on tourism, so if I am not paying directly for my accommodation I try to support the local economy in other ways. That, at least, is the excuse; the other aspect is of course that I enjoy dining out when on holiday.

Throughout the cruise I had been in regular contact with Ed Wingfield, my friend from Tyneside with the big Beneteau, who was doing the second half of a very leisurely (two-year) Round Britain, and he was being thwarted by weather just as much as I was.

By then we were in very different parts of the country - he was making his way round the "top end" of Scotland - but very often we were both stuck in port waiting for the adverse weather to clear pretty much simultaneously.

And I like a comment that I first heard from him when we were sailing together in April, but which I have since heard more widely; "Gentlemen don't go to

windward!" A long thrash to windward is far too exhausting.

One thing which I could not help noticing while I was at Ravenglass was the main line rail traffic; not because this particularly interests me, normally it doesn't, but because the line crosses the estuary immediately upstream of the anchorage. This means that the trains are both visually and acoustically conspicuous.

"The original passenger shelter at Miteside Halt was an upturned boat"

The original passenger shelter at Miteside Halt was an upturned boat, no doubt a case of making good use of what happened to be available and immediately to hand, and surplus to requirements.

That became a tradition for that particular halt, and the tradition was retained in subsequent refurbishments of the line.

The present upturned boat is a modern GRP dinghy.



There were several passenger trains per day in each direction, which I think is good service for a line serving predominantly a rural community.

However I could not escape noticing the occasional goods train, moving so very slowly as it pulled out of Ravenglass Station that it gave the impression of having stopped there - although I cannot think why it should do so - invariably hauled by two diesel locomotives, and with very few freight trucks; indeed on at least one occasion there was just one solitary freight truck, and I never saw more than four. These were flat bed trucks, each holding just one welded steel container, and my best guess is that these were hot cargoes bound for Sellafield, and the double heading was a failsafe precaution because that would be one cargo which no-one would want to be stranded somewhere because an engine had broken down.



*Hot cargo for Sellafield?
Two locomotives, and what appear
to be four nuclear flasks*

Ravenglass used to be an important Roman port, and they called it Glannoventa. I was tempted to a piece of deliberate mistranslation: *venta* - winds; *glanno* - with a bit of quasi-dyslexic random exchange and re-ordering of letters, gales. Hence “**the port of gale force winds**”!

Actually, although the name is Latin it has a Celtic root, and means “the market on the shore”, or something like that.

Finally the great day came when the weather relented - albeit only briefly. On Saturday 23rd August I was finally able to put to sea, although by then I had aborted all plans for going to the Isle of Man because even at best it would have been a rush had I done so, and if I were held up any further by the weather I would have been in real danger of running out of time. If I were forced into bringing the boat home by road I wanted it to be from mainland UK, not from overseas by means of a car ferry.

So the destination was Piel Island. She didn't float until a little before 1100, and within minutes of floating I hoisted the staysail and weighed anchor, and motored out of the estuary, in a NW wind of force 2-3. Once clear of the estuary the engine was shut down, and apart from about 10 minutes of motor-sailing just before lunch - when the wind briefly became much lighter - the engine was fully off duty until I arrived in the immediate approaches to Piel Island, in the Barrow Channel.



*Farewell to Ravenglass
- both this photo and the next one*



Initially I was using full plain sail and getting a steady three knots,

which for a passage of that length was sufficient; the course alteration at the Selker buoy then put us so broad on the wind that it was impossible to prevent the headsails from collapsing if I steered the exact course, and it was altogether more satisfactory to tack down wind.

Then the wind progressively freshened throughout the passage, and by the time I was off the Duddon Estuary we were repeatedly briefly hitting 7 knots, and the wind and the seas were still building. Time to put a reef in.

Unintentionally I pulled down the second reef in the main rather than the first one, but as soon as I had realised that I decided to stay with it. However I was more than a little surprised that neither cringle would pull fully home; admittedly we were well off the wind, but even so with that rig it should have been possible.

The solution was to temporarily furl the jib, then round up into the wind, and I decided to leave the staysail to its own devices (and just accept it flogging) while I pulled in the reefing lines; although that turned out to be a serious mistake. That enabled me to complete reefing the main with no problems, but for the first time ever I had a significant problem of a different type.

The flogging leeward sheet on the staysail managed to pick up the falls of both the topping lift and the lazy jacks, in a horrendous tangle, and with a couple of random half-hitches thrown in for good measure.

There was no way that I could sail with it like that, and no way to clear it from the cockpit, so it necessitated a visit to the foredeck - which is something that I try to avoid when single-handing in open water in lively conditions.

Essentially, if there is enough wind for me to need to reef then in a boat as small as this I don't want to be exposed on deck, just in case.

Nonetheless I have a lifeline permanently rigged to a strongpoint by the mast, and led to the top of the sprayhood, for just such an eventuality, so I duly clipped that on before doing anything else.

Once on the foredeck it was soon apparent that I could not safely clear the tangle in those conditions, so the sail had to come down, and I completed the passage on double reefed main and reefed jib, with no staysail. Interestingly I found that with that configuration I could make the exact course with no need to tack down wind, and without the headsail collapsing; I presume this is because the reefed jib was far enough forward of the main not to be blanketed by it. Even with this amount of sail reduction the log records that we were still doing 5 knots.

After a gybe and course alteration at Lightning Knoll buoy for the Barrow channel the wind and seas continued building, with occasional rogue waves, and one insolent blighter actually came aboard and gave me a soaking.

I continued under sail until about the turn in the channel, around 4 miles after Lightning Knoll, and then handed the sail and motored the final mile or so to anchor off Piel Island - with, if I remember correctly, occasional flurries of drizzle.

Finally I dropped the hook at 1915 in water as shallow as I could access that early on the rising tide, intending to move her further inshore once the tide had risen further, so as to dry out on the mud over the bottom part of the tide.

Then, with all deck chores done, I settled down to a well earned cup of tea while notifying safe arrival to my shore contact; prior to making the cabin shipshape, enjoying an equally well earned G&T, and then dinner, in that order. I have an ad hoc but surprisingly accurate method of timing my cooking; in fact I don't formally time anything, but I find that the time required to

consume one generous gin and tonic at leisure - with just a modicum of monitoring and adjusting the cooking while doing so - equates precisely to the time required to cook dinner to perfection.

On the Sunday we had a day of idyllic weather, the last such for another week(!), with light or zero winds and glorious sunshine; perfect weather for going ashore and exploring Piel Island.

“Then, with all deck chores done, I settled down to a well earned cup of tea while notifying safe arrival to my shore contact”

As recounted in Part 2, the landlord of the pub there is traditionally crowned King of Piel, and while there this time I learned something of the history of this tradition. Apparently it dates back to one Lambert Simnel who landed there from Dublin in 1487 with his supporters and claimed the throne of England, having already been crowned “Edward VI” in Ireland. According to a display in The Ship Inn on the island, he was born in 1477 of humble birth; real name and parentage unknown. At age 10 he “was taken as a pupil by a priest, Robert Shaw, who decided to be a king-maker and tutored the boy in courtly manners. Shaw noticed a resemblance between Lambert and the supposedly murdered sons of Edward IV. When he heard a rumour that one of the Princes had died during his imprisonment in the Tower of London he spread a rumour that he was alive and under his guardianship.

“Shaw took Simnel to Ireland and presented him to the Earl of Kildare, head of the Irish government.

Kildare was willing to support Shaw's story, and invade England to overthrow King Henry.

“Simnel's army landed on Piel Island on 5 June 1487 whereupon Simnel immediately laid claim to the English throne. His army clashed with King Henry's on 16 June at the Battle of Stoke Field, and Simnel was defeated. Shaw, being a priest, avoided execution, but was imprisoned for life.

“King Henry pardoned young Simnel; a puppet in the hands of adults, and gave him a job in the royal kitchen as a spit turner. He later became a falconer, and died around 1528, but his memory lives on in the tradition of the Kings of Piel.”

Wikipedia offers essentially the same story, but the adult protagonist in that version who attempted to pass off Simnel as Edward, 17th Earl of Warwick, the Yorkist heir, was John de la Pole, Earl of Lincoln, who was attempting to regain the throne for the Yorkists.

The most striking edifice on the island is the 14th century ruin known today as Piel Castle, although apparently built as a fortified warehouse for the monks of Furness Abbey. It seems that their activities were not only religious; they were also very secular farmers, who used the fortress to store their grain and wine and wool, and also to control shipping in the area. According to Wikipedia, “it was probably built ... to repel pirates and raiders, but it would appear to have had a measure of success in keeping the customs men at bay as well; smuggling was widespread at the time, and the abbey was known to have been involved.”

A very enjoyable day was spent wandering the island, dining in the pub, and chatting with the fairly inexperienced owner of a Mirror Offshore who had brought the boat over from Morecambe the previous

day but had then encountered an engine problem.



Piel Castle

The forecast however warned of very strong easterly winds commencing that night, so in deference to the forecast as soon as the boat floated on the night tide I motored over to Piel Harbour, the other side of the waterway. That commenced a solid week sitting out gales, near gales, and Strong Wind Warnings.

Even in the Harbour, although safe, there was a very uncomfortable swell when the tide was high, so while the wind was still in the east I moved anchorage round to the far side of the Island, and in doing so I gave my Rocna anchor a second demanding test, which it passed with flying colours. This was entirely my own misjudgment; I initially anchored in what seemed a good spot, but when I then dried out I felt that I was uncomfortably close to a stony patch, so I repositioned the anchor.

So far, well and good, but I had misjudged the swinging circle, and during the night we had a young gale, with a shift in direction, and I swung so that I was only a couple of lengths or so ahead of a moored fishing boat. But throughout that

gale the anchor didn't budge at all, confirmed by an inspection of the anchor in the sea bed the following morning, and on the next daylight tide I was able to move berth.

We also had at least one good gale while I was anchored in Piel Harbour itself, and there again that anchor acquitted itself with distinction.

So I had a week there essentially doing things ashore, including a pleasant walk into Barrow across the shore at Low Water, and a visit to their excellent Dock Museum. And true to form with sailing clubs everywhere, and as reported in the pilot book, the members of the local club (Roa Island Boating Club) were most hospitable and helpful.

I was however mildly irritated, but sadly not surprised, to see a sizeable dredger - the **W.D. MERSEY** - not merely displaying her RAM day shapes while actually dredging (which is entirely correct, and indeed fully expected), but also leaving them up while proceeding up and down the channel to and from her dredging operations. This was not just a one-off oversight; it was a daily occurrence.

In the course of my time there I got into conversation with a fellow septuagenarian who was a member of the local Boating Club and who is the owner of the "somewhat maculate" one of the two Morecambe Bay Prawners in the harbour, the one without her rig, and dating from (he thought) around 1900.

Although the best known builders of these splendid craft were Crossfields of Arnside, sadly long since gone to the wall, they were not by any means the only builders.

In an interesting conversation he told me that his own boat was built in Fleetwood, and with an immensely strong construction; twice as many frames (for her length) as usual. He had been

engaged in a very lengthy restoration, and he had already replaced the keelbolts and also the stem.

I greatly admire his industriousness; each one of those jobs is a job and a half, and it is the sort of work that I would prefer to leave to the professionals - but I would then need to budget very carefully to find a means of paying for it!

However by the time we met he seemed to be finding that the work had become too much for him, and at our age I am not in the least surprised. I like his comment that **"We are all 21 at heart, but our bones tell us that we won't see 71 again!"**. He was talking in terms of contacting the Nobby Association and/or owners in Liverpool, to see whether anyone else might be interested in taking her on. I told him that if we could put the clock back forty years I would bite his hand off for her, but not now!

He also told me that the other one, the beauty, and the larger of the two, was built in Ulverston, and has recently been very fully restored with the help of a massive amount of Lottery money. The latter was for the express purpose of taking people out to sail, "but we haven't seen that happening yet!"

I subsequently learned that the restoration had been done by Scott Metcalfe, of Waterfront Marine, Port Penrhyn, and also that she is now owned by a trust, and that she does indeed get used, and does take people out sailing. [Hearts of Oak](#) (nobbyownersassociation.co.uk)

Finally, a week to the day after the idyllic summer day on Piel Island, the summer returned and enabled me to make the next leg of the cruise.

That will be recounted in Part Five.

"We are all 21 at heart, but our bones tell us that we won't see 71 again!"

TWO-POT PAINTS AND VARNISHES

When I came to repaint and revarnish *A Capella* I discovered to my concern that as from August International Paints are withdrawing their Perfection range of 2-pot polyurethane finishes from the DIY market, and in the meantime stocks are being run down. An email enquiry resulted in this response:

“We have had to cease selling Perfection to the public because of isocyanates being banned for public use.

“We do not have a 2 pot for your use coming out in the near future.

“Sorry”

While accepting that operatives spraying these materials professionally on a daily basis may well be at significant risk, amateurs using them only very occasionally, and applying them by brush or roller when we do use them, are at much less risk; so I wondered whether the prohibition was due to “an excess of caution”.

This was not an academic question: at any one time I normally have a modest stock, and at the time of writing I can still source further stocks. So do I lay in a stockpile for future use, or do I throw up my hands in horror and bin the lot (and then switch to alternative products)?

They are still supplying what appears to be exactly these same finishes for professional use, albeit in a limited range of colours, but the pack size is 1 gallon. That pack size discourages DIY purchases, as it is far more than one

is likely to use at any one time, it will be seriously expensive, and it will have a limited shelf life (particularly once opened).

Further digging around on the internet, and correspondence with a small handful of other boating types, at least one of whom has expert specialist knowledge, revealed that:

1. The health and environmental dangers of **spraying** these finishes have been well known for many years.
2. There is documented evidence that the risks associated with brushing these finishes or applying them by roller are so low as to be insignificant, and in most cases undetectable (i.e. below the threshold of detectability).
3. A North American friend and colleague advised that these products are still readily available over there, and that both the DIY and Pro versions are listed on the firm’s website (although spray application by amateurs is definitely and firmly discouraged). He suggested that the prohibition on this side of the Atlantic is likely to be an EU matter, and that perhaps International are applying the same restriction to the UK in order to simplify their marketing.
4. Finally, I traced a research report by the Health & Safety Laboratory, admittedly dated 2005 (I have not managed to find any more recent data) which specifically investigated the risks associated with mixing, brushing, and roller application.

https://www.hse.gov.uk/research/hsl_pdf/2005/hsl0560.pdf. This showed conclusively that:

- a. **In most instances no contamination was detectable,** and they also provide estimates for

"LOD" values - the limit of detectability - and these are single figures (microgram per cubic metre, 4 for brushing, 5 for mixing, 8 for rolling), which are very substantially less than the maximum permitted exposure levels (70 microgram per cubic metre for the short term (15 minute) and 20 for the long term (8 hour) exposure durations.

So in saying that no contamination was detectable they are saying that the level was below this threshold, which is a very long way below the maximum permitted exposure levels.

- b. **For the biological monitoring, in all cases there was nothing detected.**

c. Their overall conclusion was that there was no detectable airborne contamination of isocyanates, but there was potential for dermal contamination - particularly with mixing and rolling, less so with brushing - as the paint dripped onto the protective gloves. The nil detections in the biological monitoring indicated that the PPE used was adequate to prevent exposure.

- d. An air-fed visor was used for all operations.

Your Editor was somewhat relieved by this actual data, which tends to confirm his suspicions that the ban is the result of "an excess of caution". He will continue to use 2-pot paints and varnishes for as long as he can obtain them, including by modest stockpiling; but will wear gloves (which he tends to do anyway for painting operations), and will consider eye protection and consider some kind of face mask.

“From what I understand, it seems to have been an issue for multiple use boat builders/repairers.”

However a response from one correspondent paints a very different picture. John Button wrote:

“Isocyanates - in the form of Toluene diisocyanate, used in paint and PU foam, are extremely nasty. Tolerable exposure limits measured in parts per billion - see p7 in the attachment.
U N D E R N O C I R C U M S T A N C E U S E T H E M I N D O O R S. Effects include known carcinogen, culmulative lung damage.....

“A simple face mask is of no use

“In a former life I worked on design of detectors for TDI - extreme precautions were taken to avoid inhaling fumes.

“good sailing and bin the 2 pot!”

The attachment to which he referred is a technical manual of Incident Management, produced by Public Health England, for dealing with cases of exposure to Toluene Diisocyanate.

That viewpoint, and especially coming from someone with his professional background and expertise, is worth serious consideration. However John points to the “Tolerable exposure limits measured in parts per billion”, but the data quoted is identical to the corresponding data quoted in the earlier paper referred to above, and that paper found that for mixing and for application by either brush or roller **there was in fact no detectable contamination, even at levels far below those “tolerable” levels.**

So the decision is yours whether to try to lay in a stockpile for the next

couple of years or so, or alternatively throw up your hands in horror and bin the lot. Your Editor’s own decision is the former;

to try to accumulate a modest stockpile for future use - but only about 2 years’ worth, because of the limited shelf life; but he will not even be tempted to spray the stuff.

That said, there is an entirely separate question surrounding safe and environmentally responsible disposal of part-used containers, and your Editor asked International Paints for their advice about this. This was partly in the context that opened cans of the hardener (Part B) tend to turn solid after a period, and as a comparative layman (but with nonetheless a scientific background, and having looked at the safety data sheets) I suspected that the particularly noxious chemicals were confined to this part of the product, and I also suspected that in this state they might offer no hazard. Their reply was

“You are correct in that the Part B contains the isocyanate and once hard most of the isocyanate content has evaporated.

“I would check with your local recycling centre first to see if they will take the product. My local recycling centre will take solvent and 2-part paint products but I do appreciate this isn’t consistent area to area.”

My old friend Dave Bower, currently Hon. Secretary of the GP14 Class Association, has recently emailed me to say

“As I remember, Pete Nickless’ Dad, Frank, was made seriously (if not fatally?) ill by spraying International 2 Pack Polyurethane paint on the boats he was building.

“I have repainted many boats by brush/roller using this product, but was always careful to use a well ventilated space.

“From what I understand, it seems to have been an issue for multiple use boat builders/repairers.

“Look at: <https://www.osha.gov/isocyanates#:~:text=Isocyanates%20include%20compounds%20classified%20as,nose%2C%20throat%2C%20and%20skin.>

“However, I would ensure that you use a proper face mask (ie, not a nylon based 'covid' mask), even for a one off painting job. You should always wear gloves and a hooded overall, they are relatively easy to obtain. I always did after Pete told me his Dad was seriously ill.

“There are other, better, paint products available now, and I was a bit surprised that International had only stopped manufacturing relatively recently.

“My Brother in Law has a spray shop and he may well be able to advise me on better products (I recently lined him up to respray the doors, wings etc on my MGA with a 2 pack acrylic paint.)”

I am interested in his comment that “There are other, better, paint products available now”, and have asked him for further information.

NAUTICAL DEFINITIONS

Collision mat:

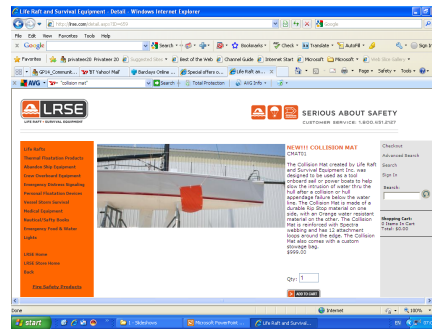
A large piece of heavy canvas, roped at its corners, intended to cover an underwater hole in the hull of a vessel. The ropes, known as **hogging lines** enable the crew to manoeuvre the mat into position. See also **fothering**, below.

The editor has seen, albeit only online, commercially produced collision mats aimed at the yacht market and intended to be permanently carried aboard as part of a damage control kit.

[Collision Mat](#)
([landfallnavigation.com](#))



It is patterned after a design by well-known cruising expert John Neal. Intended for power or sail boats, it temporarily holds an object. Using its three securing lines, the Collision Mat is passed under your hull until it covers up the hole. Then, using three tightly secured lines, hold the mat against your hull and reduce water flow so you can attempt repairs or call for help. The mat is made of a heavy, vinyl-coated fabric with 2"-wide nylon webbing around the perimeter which also reinforces the heavy grommets. It is held in place by 12 stainless steel D-rings and 12 stainless steel webbing straps around the edge. The Collision Mat also comes with a carrying bag. Measures 4' on each edge. Comes in a bright-orange storage bag.



[Collision Mats Photo Gallery by Nonsuch Photo Galleries at pbase.com](#)

Fother, or fothering; thrumming

Use of a sail, or sail, tarpaulin, or whatever other expanse of stout cloth is to hand, for covering an underwater leak in a vessel.

This technique was used to help refloat [HMS Endeavour](#) after she went aground on the Great Barrier Reef on 11 June 1770.

The process can be made vastly more effective by pulling large numbers of yarns or other short and small strands through the canvas, to create a woolly layer.

If natural fibres are used for this, they may well swell once underwater to help make the temporary repair more watertight.

Historically the term *thrum* originally referred specifically to worthless pieces of warp thread which remained after weaving a piece of fabric using a loom, though its meaning has since broadened to include any small pieces of wool or thread which are used in a similar way. This process is known as thrumming.

However in nautical usage in (relatively) modern times, fothering a sail (or other expanse of cloth) is normally understood to include thrumming as an integral part of the process.

A vivid description of the technique, executed in dramatic circumstances in the Antarctic and in imminent gale conditions, is a small but structural part of the Wilbur Smith novel *Hungry As The Sea*.

Bar Chat

Finally, from *Cruising in Seraffyn*; in their Appendix 1 the authors discuss at length the cost of blue-water cruising, and offer a convincing argument that it is indeed affordable to a young couple on an average income, provided they make that their absolute priority. I do not for one moment dispute that, but the caveat is what one decides is the main priority.

In my own case, other things were more important, albeit that at that age I never even considered the blue-water cruising option; but if I were to decide afresh today I believe that I would make the same choices.

Amongst those other things were my professional career, in my chosen field, plus friends and family in this country, plus a major interest and semi-professional career as a performing musician (at first as an orchestral string player, and later as an organist and choirmaster), and above all by the time I reached age forty. My burgeoning relationship with my then young godson - who became as close as a son; and I am delighted that over forty years later and as mature adults the relationship survives on that level to this day. And there are absolutely no regrets there, on either side!

So, yes, the blue-water cruising dream is probably eminently achievable for those for whom it is a priority; but there are others, perhaps many others, who have different priorities - let us say no more than that.

For us it is immensely enjoyable to read about what others have

achieved, but we ourselves would never wish to commit that amount of time - or the totality of that part of our lives - to it, and for very good reasons.

Readers will recall that in the last issue we invited entries for a competition for the most amusing trading name for a business in the nautical field. We had hoped to be offered the nautical equivalent of the Irish solicitors, who so very nearly became Argue, Phibbs & Cheetham; or the West Midlands estate agents Doolittle & Dally; or the medical practice Chambers & Potts; or the (fictitious) solicitors Soo, Grabbitt & Runn.

Sadly we had no entries; but the concept remains open. If any reader cares to respond, and if the Editor likes it, we will publish your entry; of course, "the Editor's decision is final", to quote the usual caveat.

Many of us will be familiar with the colloquialism: "Its' not over until the fat lady sings"; but in an idle moment some months ago I wondered where the expression came from, and looked it up online. One popular perception is that it refers to Wagner's epic series of operas, *The Ring Cycle*, in which after a total of around 14 hours performance spread over four operas the Valkyrie Brünhilde - usually cast as a "well upholstered" lady - sings the final aria.

Another popular perception, fostered in a Library of Congress book, *Respectfully Quoted*, is that the phrase was coined in 1978 by Dan Cook, a sports writer, when

his town's basketball team had gone one up in a championship series. Other accounts differ as to the commentator and the occasion.

Some believe it originates in baseball, and there is also a contrary suggestion that it originates with WW2 patriotic films. Yet others attribute it to Al Capone, speaking to his bodyguards, on the occasion of his first visit to the opera.

However all these diverse explanations may just possibly be simply quoting an already existing saying. An interesting and very different theory was set out in a letter some months ago on The Guardian's webpage, claiming that it dates from the days of steamships, and sailors' shore leave.

The ship's boiler was affectionately known as "the fat lady", which seems entirely plausible; and before the ship could leave port she had to raise steam, which took some considerable time. Once she had built up a sufficient head of steam, she sounded her whistle; so "the fat lady sings". That was the signal to sailors on shore leave that their run ashore had ended, and that they needed to report back to the ship.

[What is the origin of "The show's not over till the fat lady sings"? | Notes and Queries | guardian.co.uk \(theguardian.com\)](https://www.guardian.co.uk/the-guardian/notes-and-queries/2014/sep/16/what-is-the-origin-of-the-shows-not-over-till-the-fat-lady-sings) - letter from James Schofield.

Talking of which, the English language is full of expressions which have a nautical origin. That might make an interesting mini-series at some point.

Many of us are familiar with the term "overfalls", the name given to turbulent water caused by tide or

current moving over a rough and shallow seabed. On our own very local patch we get them over the banks opposite the Club at certain stages of tide, particularly with strong wind against tide. Sensible sailors generally avoid them wherever possible, unless they are very mild.

Spare a thought, then, for those who manned the US lightship of that name, stationed near the mouth of Delaware Bay and marking the Overfalls Shoal, whose shallowest part had a charted depth of only 10 feet. The photograph below, found online and c/o US Coastguard, is indicative of the sort of conditions which may not have been a daily occurrence, but which I would assume may have been routinely endured from time to time. This particular ship, the last one on the station, was built in 1951, and the station was decommissioned in 1960.

“A crew of fifteen was assigned to WLV-605 when a reporter visited her in 1955. One seaman and an engineman were on watch at all times, and a four-hour watch was typically served followed by eight hours off. The men lived aboard for twenty-one days and were then treated to an eight-day leave.”

Amongst the hazards of the job was collision, when passing ships hit her, because she served as a mid-channel marker. *“In October of 1954, a large tanker staved in the lightship’s bow and knocked it a full quarter mile off station.”*

[Lightship Overfalls LV 118/WAL 538 Lighthouse, Delaware at Lighthousefriends.com](#)



However some people, of course, do it for fun!



Photo found online some years ago, but I no longer have a record of the original source; sorry.

Navigational (and Colregs) lights.

Most of us are surely at least aware of the existence of navigational lights, found in copious numbers in our own estuary on buoys; colours are normally red, green, white, or yellow, - the latter being reserved for “special purpose” buoys which do not necessarily have a navigational significance - and they are “flashing” (in the non-technical sense) with a characteristic that enables individual ones, or particular sets (in the case of buoys), to be identified.

Flashing in the technical sense, i.e. less than one flash per second, is just one of the nine different characteristics possible. Further afield similar ones, but larger and more powerful, are found on lighthouses, LANBYs, etc.

And if you happen to see an alternating blue and yellow one keep well clear; that is used for a temporary wreck marking buoy, for a new wreck, before the authorities have had time to deal with the wreck properly.

As well as such nautical navigational lights are some aero beacons, and these are sometimes useful to us nautical types, and may

be marked on our charts. At least some of these in the UK are coded in Morse Code, although an internet search suggests that in North America characteristics more akin to our nautical lights are used. The old Liverpool Airport used to have a green beacon, which I used to regularly see from the top of Holt’s Field, which flashed a Morse signal which from memory was either **LPL** or **LP** - although I can’t now remember which of the two it was. Some other airfields have similar, including Warton Airfield on the Lune estuary, flashing green Morse **WQ**.

But some lights which appear at first to be coded as navigational lights actually have nothing to do with navigation. While walking on the Sefton Coast earlier in the year I noticed a very bright “flashing” white light just to the right of Blackpool Tower, and I had previously seen what appears to be the same one while sailing past some years ago. But I cannot make any sense of the characteristic, which appears to be random; certainly it is not one of the standard codes, and neither does it appear to be Morse. And I cannot find it on the chart, although the location appears to be on or very close to Blackpool Airport. Does anyone happen to know what this one is?

Belatedly, in a resort like Blackpool I wonder whether it might have something to do with a disco??

Then there was the occasion of my visit to Fleetwood Marina some years ago. Over the course of a few days in the Marina I was puzzled by a Qk. Fl. light within the Marina itself (i.e. white, and exactly one flash per second). Not only could I not find it on the chart, but I was puzzled as to whatever could be the purpose of such a light within the Marina, unless it was one of a pair of leading lights - but in that case one would expect it to be on the chart, which it was not.

Eventually I walked round to investigate, and found it to be simply a very bright signal/monitor

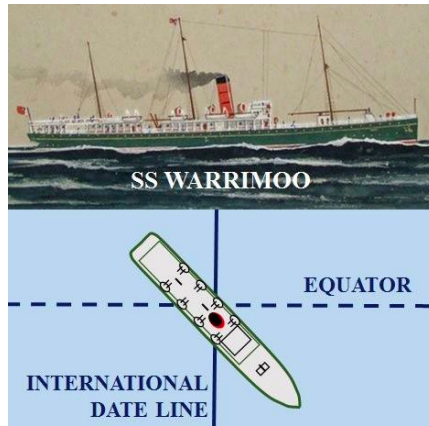
light on the burglar alarm of an industrial building!

Nearer home, and this time Colregs light rather than navigational ones, there are the chimneys at Stanlow. Several of them have all-round red lights, spaced vertically, as a warning to aircraft.

One in particular is adjacent to a flare stack which (when flaring) gives off a vaguely white light, and that just happens to be at an intermediate height between two (sets of) reds. When they happen to be in line, as seen from a certain part of our own approach road, they form the classic red-white-red vertical array to indicate a chimney restricted in its ability to manoeuvre!!

One 70-odd year old legend about a claimed nautical event more than 40 years before the story first appeared concerns the steamship *SS Warrimoo*. Apparently most of the story first appeared in a Canadian newspaper in 1942, and concerns the said ship at the exact turn of the century.

As reported, on the evening of 31st December 1899 she was close to both the equator and the International Date Line, and steaming south and east towards both of these. When the navigator worked out his evening position he realised that by making just small alterations to course and speed the ship could be manoeuvred so as to cross both the equator and the International date line at exactly midnight. The idea appealed to the captain, and with five experienced navigators onboard they were all summoned to the bridge to assist in achieving that feat.



*Image found in multiple places online;
origin of image unclear*

The tantalising result is that the fore part of the ship was in the southern hemisphere while the after part was in the northern; also the fore part was in the western hemisphere while the after part was in the eastern one (that is correct, if you think about it, with the western hemisphere on the right of the diagram, as the divider here was longitude 180° , not 0°); passengers and crew in the fore part were living in the 20th century, on 1st January 1900 (if we overlook the quibble that the twentieth century didn't actually start until 1st January 1901), while those in the after part were still in the 19th century, on 31st December 1899.

Thus the ship was simultaneously in 4 different hemispheres, two different dates, and even two different centuries.

The first and perhaps obvious point is that there is no way in which the navigational techniques of the time could possibly have been sufficiently accurate to say with any certainty whether the ship was indeed so positioned. She was only 345 ft long, with a beam of only 42.2 ft, and although today we are used to the impressive precision of satnav (when at its best) it is easy to forget that even the best astro-navigation work cannot achieve anything like that degree of

precision. An uncertainty of just 1 second in timing of a fix at the equator corresponds to an east-west positional uncertainty of a quarter of a mile, vastly more than the longest dimension of that ship.

That does not of course rule out the possibility that the captain and officers may have tried, and may indeed have believed that they succeeded; but the unavoidable uncertainty is greater than the largest dimension of the ship, so we cannot reliably say that they succeeded.

The story has reappeared many times since then, in multiple places, including being circulated by Phil to members of this club a few years ago. It was also investigated a few years ago by the hoax-checking site Snopes.com.

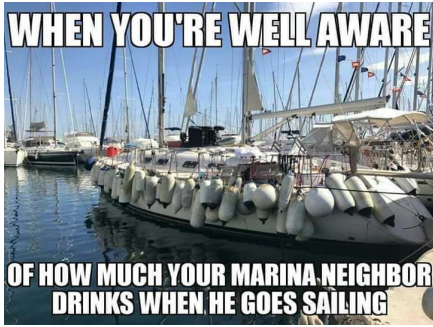
Navigational uncertainties apart, the Snopes.com article found that she was indeed in the right part of the ocean at that time, which leaves open the possibility that this may have happened. But if it did happen, the article also asks why it took more than 40 years for the story to emerge - which rather suggests that it is more likely to be a later fabrication.

Your choice whether to accept the story or not.

[Did the SS Warrimoo Exist in Two Centuries at Once? | Snopes.com](#)

Incidentally Wikipedia has an interesting article about the history and service of the ship; [SS Warrimoo - Wikipedia](#)

Thus the ship was simultaneously in 4 different hemispheres, two different dates, and even two different centuries.



*Sent by my oldest sailing friend;
origin unknown*

Followers of the Royal Family's doing will no doubt have been aware of the spectacular flypast to celebrate the King's official birthday, somewhat ugraded after bad weather forced the reduction in scale of the flypast for the Coronation.

Although the image is now known to be spurious, I am reminded of - and still enjoy - the spoof image of the Harrier Jet flypast over the Houses of Parliament when it was announced that the fleet was to

be decommissioned, and they purportedly sent a message to Parliament:

Look at this carefully...it is a brilliant example of British Humour!

The British government has scrapped the Harrier fleet and on their farewell formation flypast over the Houses of Parliament they gave the government a message.

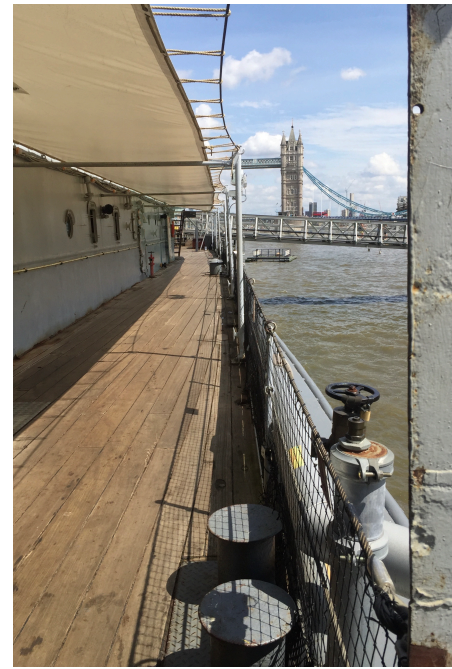
Lean back a bit from your computer monitor and squint. Seriously...push your chair back a couple of feet.. My hat is off to the man that was leading this Squadron.



Lean a little back from your monitor, and squint; or just push your chair back a little, or look from side to side.

However the Snopes website assures us that no such protest ever took place, and that the image has been manipulated.

Pictured: HMS Belfast



UNUSUAL BOATS - ISSUE 31

Vintage traditional Passenger / Tour Boats:

These, most of them seen on my travels over the years, are a delight to behold. They remind one of the old seamen's adage, that if something looks right it probably is right!

This is definitely not a Dunkirk Little Ship, and her present home is a very long way from those waters, but she is indeed of almost exactly that era; just very slightly younger. It is intended that the next article in this series will feature the Dunkirk Little Ships.

registered on the [National Register of Historic Vessels](#), certificate number 1893. [Name Karina | National Historic Ships](#)

Built in 1946 in Dartmouth for a local ferry company in Plymouth she was at first used mainly on the Tamar, and remained working primarily within Plymouth Sound under a succession of owners until 1988, when with another change of owners she moved to the River Dart.

Then in 2001 she was bought by the Laxey Towing Company, and operated out of Douglas, under a local shipmaster, Captain Stephen Carter, primarily to provide pleasure cruises for visitors, although she was also available for private functions..

Wikipedia reports that she "suffered some slight damage during a storm over the 2017-2018 winter period, although by this time Carter had already decided to



Seen in Douglas harbour, Isle of Man, summer 2018

From online researches she appears to be *M.V. Karina*, and is (or at least was)

conclude the summer cruises at the end of the 2018 season.

Rather than undertake the necessary repairs, it was decided to place the vessel up for sale. The *Karina* was purchased by a concern in West Africa, where it is intended that she will operate wildlife cruises on a river in The Gambia.”

[MV Karina - Wikipedia](#)

And then the two best loved of the Ullswater Steamers:

Lady of the Lake (below)
photographed from aboard *A
Capella*,

The Editor has known both these Ullswater Steamers since his childhood, 70 years ago. They date from the nineteenth century, and *Lady of the Lake* is believed to be one of the world’s oldest passenger vessels still working. Both were originally steam-powered, of course (normal for that era), but were converted to diesel in the thirties, and both are members of the National Historic Fleet.

Lady of the Lake was built in Glasgow, and transported by rail in sections to Penrith, and then by horse and dray to

Waterside, where she was assembled, and launched in June 1877.

Raven, named after Ravenscragg, the lakeside home of company director William Hugh Parkin, was launched in July 1889. In 1912, she was made a temporary royal yacht when the German Emperor Wilhelm II visited Ullswater during his stay with the 5th Earl of Lonsdale. Her decks were painted yellow, the Earl's personal colour, for the occasion.

I wouldn't want to have either of them at sea in severe



weather, but then they are not designed for that; however as a commendable case of inspired altruism.

although the website for the latter offers only skeletal



lake boats for use in reasonable conditions they are a delight.

The fleet are maintained on a slipway located at the Waterside Campsite, which is owned by the Lake District Estates Group, which also owns the operating company, Ullswater Steamers, and the Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway. It is worth mentioning that both the latter companies were acquired by the late Sir Wavell Wakefield, later Lord Wakefield, to save them from bankruptcy and to prevent them being wound up;

Raven (stock photo I think)

I gather that both vessels are nowadays used only during the summer months. Ullswater Steamers also nowadays have a fleet of three more modern vessels, which were acquired from previous salt water service, for use throughout the year.

By the same token, although I do not know any of them personally, we might add the Steam Yacht Gondola, now owned by the National Trust and based on Coniston, and some at least of the Windermere Steamers -

information about the boats themselves!!

[Visiting the Steam Yacht Gondola | Cumbria | National Trust](#)

[Compare Our Vessels \(w i n d e r m e r e - lakecruises.co.uk\)](#)

NEXT ISSUE: Press date will be Sept 15, please