
QUARTERDECK

The Friends of HMS Trincomalee

Summer 2018



The Restoration of HMS Trincomalee

John Seccombe and the Lion

All aboard TS Foudroyant 1949 to 1952

Notice of Annual General Meeting 2018

Mess Deck Crossword & Forward Events

EDITORIAL

On 27th July it will be 31 years since our ship arrived in the River Tees as the Foudroyant (Front cover photograph).

Her restoration at Hartlepool officially started on 1st January 1990, and was completed at the end of the year 2000. The main article in this Quarterdeck is an account of this restoration, and my thanks go to Alan Storm, Laurie Merrin and Malcolm Cook, all Friends of HMS Trincomalee, for supplying the photographs used.

In searching through newspaper archives I was amused to find the report of an escapade a former lieutenant on our ship got involved in, later in his career – see ‘John Seccombe and the Lion’.

The Notice of our Annual General Meeting in September appears on pages 44 and 45. If you are able to come, please do, in this twenty fifth year of the Friends.

As with the last few Summer Quarterdecks, the crossword is a cryptic one with maritime connections ... Good luck!

Hugh Turner

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The Restoration of HMS Trincomalee

Introduction:

From 1897 to 1931 the owner of our ship was Geoffrey Cobb, and during this period the ship was used for training youngsters from disadvantaged backgrounds in seamanship. In September 1902, she was renamed the Foudroyant, after Nelson's former flagship that was wrecked off the North Pier at Blackpool on 16th June 1897.

After the death of Geoffrey Cobb in 1931, his wife became the new owner and the ship was moved to Portsmouth. Mrs Cobb transferred ownership of the Foudroyant to the Implacable Committee, this Committee being renamed the Foudroyant Committee in the later 1940s. In the 1980s the ship was being used as a training ship for school parties, scouts and sea rangers, but the number of people using the facility had declined making it uneconomical to continue in such a rôle. On 10th October 1986 the decision was made by the Foudroyant Trust to stop using the ship for training and to concentrate on the care and maintenance of the ship. By January 1987, Hartlepool was selected as the best site for the restoration.

On 22nd July 1987, the Dutch heavy lift barge, Pacific Goliath, came into Portsmouth harbour, was flooded down, and the Foudroyant towed into position on the base. The next day our ship was towed out of the harbour she had occupied for the previous fifty-five years, and she arrived in the River Tees on 27th July. The Foudroyant was then un-docked and towed across to Hartlepool for a civic reception.



It was only after securing adequate funding and a secure berth that the restoration of the ship could begin. The official date for the start of the restoration was 1st January 1990, and on 28th March 1990 the Chairman of the Foudroyant Trust announced that the ship would revert to her original name, HMS Trincomalee. A new Trincomalee Trust was formed with the same trustees who had been trustees of the now dormant Foudroyant Trust.



Preparatory Work:

The Trincomalee Trust was able to draw on the skills and experience of locals who had worked on the restoration of HMS Warrior and the paddle steamer Wingfield Castle. Preparation for the restoration required providing light and power on board, with office and workshop space ashore. New gangways allowed the removal of non-original cabins and clutter, inappropriate for a ship that was to be presented as she was when first built.

Bathrooms, showers and heating systems were all removed. The false forecastle which contained these “modern” appliances was dismantled, and a large poop cabin and a stump mast were similarly taken away. After the



removal of some ballast the mastless hull floated high in the water, this allowed the construction of platforms to allow access to the outer topsides. Defective timber was identified to be subsequently replaced.

The dry-dock at the Historic Quay was not available straight away, indeed it was August 1996 when the ship was first moved into the then restored dock. The decision was made to restore the above-water hull before working on the ship's bottom. The topsides were stripped away from the weather deck down to the sound teak planks just above the copper sheathing. Fortunately the hull was found to be strong. Pumps, fire alarms and lighting were added to the ship for safety reasons, and research was made into providing her with three masts and a full sailing rig.

Phase 1:

Sufficient preparatory work had been done by May 1992 to move on to Phase 1 of the restoration, restoring the above-water hull. Woodworking machines, a fork-lift truck, an expansion of the workforce and over 50 tons of high grade West African Opepe hardwood were all acquired. Sheltered staging allowed the restoration team to work in most conditions.

The ship was repaired in twenty-foot stages, working from the stern, and the original gunport layout was reconstructed from a Leda class of ship drawing.







Autumn 1992 marked the completion of nearly half the restoration of the upperworks. On 18th May 1993, the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh visited Hartlepool in the Royal Yacht Britannia, the Queen opening the gateway of the then developing Heritage Quay area, The Duke, Patron of the Trincomalee Trust since 9th June 1992, inspected the ship and met those involved with the restoration.

Phase 2:

With Phase 1 of the restoration being near to completion, Phase 2, the masts, was already underway, with the welcomed funding of grants from English Heritage and the National Heritage Memorial Fund. In terms of total costs, at the close of the 1992-1993 accounting period £1.6 million had already been spent, and it was felt that a further £3.1 million would be needed to complete the restoration.

1993 marked the foundation of our group, the “Friends of HMS Trincomalee”, to help support the ship.

The Stern and Masts:

In 1994 work began on the bow and stern, the ship still being afloat due to delays in opening the dry-dock.

The ship’s stern was substantially rebuilt in 1846, when she was being fitted out for service as a corvette, and when the restoration was started this was the structure apparent on the ship. The Trust decided to retain the 1846 stern although to return other parts of the ship to its 1817 state. It was felt that having an original 1846 stern was better than replacing it with a replica 1817 one, and it would be the cheaper option.

By Spring 1994 the mainmast was almost complete, consisting of three sections destined to reach over 160ft (49m) above the waterline. The main top – the platform at the top of the lower section – had been built in the workshop, and was over 17ft (5m) wide, weighing over 3 tons. Firms local to Hartlepool were entrusted with making the yards. The main yard at 84ft (26m) long would be wider than the ship itself, and on completion HMS Trincomalee would carry 27 separate yards, all different. In order to reduce the cost of maintenance these spars were produced using galvanised steel.

On 16th May 1995 Trincomalee’s mainmast was erected without a hitch using a 200-tonne crane, and during the Summer of 1995 the lower mainmast, lower foremast and bowsprit were put into position. When the mizzen mast was added



on 27th February 1996 our ship became fully masted again, for the first time in over 140 years. 2,000 feet of standing rigging was required, and visitors to the restoration site could see the craftsmanship involved in splicing, parcelling and serving the heavy ropes.

Dry Docking:

It was soon after dawn, on Saturday 31st August 1996, that HMS Trincomalee slipped her moorings at the berth in Jackson Dock which had been her home for over six years, and was edged into the former William Gray graving dock at the Historic Quay with the assistance of the fishing vessels Torus and Progress. With near perfect weather conditions the operation was completed without a hitch, the ship settling on to the keel blocks as the dock was pumped dry.

By Spring 1997 the remains of the hull's copper sheathing and its fastenings had been completed, some of the copper was melted down and cast into ingots for storage and recycling. Interestingly, as the copper was removed it became clear from an examination of the nails in the hull and the remnants of the felt behind the copper-plating, that this was the original coppering applied to the hull when HMS Trincomalee was first built. A system of staging and working platforms, allowing the restoration team access to all parts of the hull, had been constructed in steel and timber.

The process of re-caulking and applying new felt and copper sheets to the hull had begun by Summer 1998, with the removal and replacement of rotten timbers in the frames and planking. Fenders, chesstrees, boat davits and steps were fitted, and the hull above the coppering painted, greatly enhancing the look of the ship. Bill boards for the ship's bower anchors were fitted and come Summer 1999 the staging around the hull was being removed.

On 8th February 2000 seawater was let into the dry-dock. The restoration team looked on as the water level rose, and subsequent examination showed that, as expected, the hull was sound and watertight, with only a very small amount of water detectable in the bilges following the reconstruction of the hull and its re-caulking, felting and coppering. At this stage the dock was not fully flooded and the keel remained on the blocks. Eight days later, on 16th February, the dry-dock was further flooded, and at around 10.30am the stern and then the bow lifted off the blocks as the ship came afloat on almost an even keel after three and a half years in dry-dock. After being lifted off the blocks, the ship was moved slightly forward so that the areas of the keel which had been sitting on the blocks could be exposed for coppering.

Restoration Complete:

The end of 2000 marked the official completion of the restoration of HMS Trincomalee. Among the final items to be completed were the sealing of the deck timbers, the replacement of the restored ship's wheels and the installation of the capstan. This did not mean that the ship was in a finished state in



December 2000, the remaining work being classified as “fitting out” rather than restoration work. It was in Summer 2001 that the trustees of HMS Trincomalee were delighted to announce that both the restoration and fitting out of the ship was complete.

Sources:

Trincomalee News – The Newsletter of the HMS Trincomalee Trust

Quarterdeck – The Newsletter of the Friends of HMS Trincomalee

Trincomalee, The last of Nelson’s Frigates – Andrew Lambert

Hugh Turner



A set of caulking tools

John Herbert Seccombe and the Lion



John Seccombe served as a Lieutenant aboard HMS Trincomalee during her first commission on the North America and West Indies Station, 1847 to 1850.

John entered the Royal Navy as a Naval Cadet in 1829, becoming a Lieutenant in 1842, a Commander in 1855, and then a Captain in 1859. He was promoted to Rear Admiral on the retired list in 1876, and then attained the rank of Retired Vice Admiral in November 1881. He died on Monday 14 September 1894 at Fairham, Paignton, Devon at the age of 78 years.

It was whilst he was a Commander that he had an unusual encounter with a lion, as reported in the Isle of Wight Observer of Saturday 12 February 1859:

“Her Majesty’s steam transport Himalaya, Commander John Seccombe, arrived at Spithead on Saturday morning, from Malta, Gibraltar, and Tangier. She would have arrived at Spithead on Friday evening, but in coming up the West Channel she touched the ground on Peel-bank, it being nearly low water at the time; she came off again in about two hours, without sustaining the slightest injury. The weather was exceedingly thick at the time, raining heavily, and blowing hard from the S.W. On coming off the ground, Captain Seccombe anchored his vessel at the Motherbank for the night, getting under way again the next morning for Spithead.

The Himalaya’s dates are, - sailed from Malta at 2 pm on the 24th of January, at Gibraltar in the 28th, at 8 am.; sailed from Gibraltar for Tangier at 2 pm on the 29th, and arrived there at 5 pm the same day.

The next morning embarked the presents of horses and wild beasts from the Emperor of Morocco to Her Majesty, consisting of one lion, one leopard, six ostriches, one gazelle, six horses, two mares, and an animal called by the Moorish attendants ‘irwy’, but which in appearance much resembles the mountain sheep of California, known by the trapper name of ‘bighorn’. The horses and animals have come to England in charge of four Moors, who form so slight attraction, dressed in their Moorish costume.

The somewhat unusual spectacle of a ‘lion hunt’ took place on board on the 2nd inst.. One of the Moors was engaged in feeding the lion through a door which opened for that purpose in a part of his cage or den, when, with a sudden spring, the animal dashed through the opening on to the steamer’s main deck, which, as may be imagined, was soon ‘cleared.’

The hatchways were at once closed, and measures promptly taken by Commander Seccombe to secure the animal as speedily as possible. For this purpose the commander, with the senior lieutenant, boatswain, sergeant of Marines, and two men, descended to the main deck, taking with them the end of a stout line; this was riven through a ringbolt in the deck, and a running noose formed with the end.

After some considerable manoeuvring the noose was thrown over the lion’s head, the word was given to the hands on deck, who ran away with the other end of the line, and the lion was pinned down to the ringbolt in the deck. His legs were immediately secured, and he was dragged back to his den in safety.

The Himalaya steamed into Portsmouth harbour on Saturday at high water and made fast alongside the Dockyard jetty.”

Summer aboard TS Foudroyant in the Mid-Twentieth Century and Commander Spalding

In the three decades after the end of the Second World War, many children experienced Summer holidays quite different from those of today. During this time TS Foudroyant (later to be renamed HMS Trincomalee) provided experience of the sea, and seamanship to children, some coming from homes many miles from the sea, such as a group from Nottinghamshire as reported in the Nottingham Evening Post of Saturday 19 August 1950:



“SEA SCOUTS OFF TO CAMP

A party of 23 Sea Scouts, aged from 11 to 18, left Nottingham to-day for Gosport, on their way to join the training ship Foudroyant for a week's camp. They are members of the 1st Nottm. Y.M.C.A. Sea Scouts and the 1st Notts. Sea Scouts in charge of Scouter Peter Galloway.

Earlier to-day Long Eaton Sea Scouts left for the same destination.

The scouts will join others from different parts of the country, making a total of 100 on board the Foudroyant, a 133-year-old frigate, moored in Portsmouth Harbour.

LOVE OF THE SEA.

During the week they will undergo a seamanship training course, the aim of which is to inculcate a love of the sea and combine character building with an enjoyable holiday.

The course will include instruction with rope and wire, swimming and life-saving, signalling and lectures. Emphasis will be on practical instruction in boats under sail.

The Scouts will pay visits to H.M.S. Victory, a modern man-of-war, and the Admiralty Gunnery School, H.M.S. Excellent, and Submarine Depot H.M.S. Dolphin.

NOT ENTIRELY NEW.

Scout Galloway, who is attached to the 1st Nottingham Y.M.C.A. Troop, told the Post before they left: "It should be our most valuable and realistic camp. We have never done anything like this before. It is not entirely new to the Notts. Troop – they have had several training courses in the Discovery – but they are all looking forward to it."

The following report, from the Portsmouth Evening News of Thursday 15 January 1953, tells us both of the plans for the ship in that year's season and about the newly appointed superintendent of the ship, Commander Spalding:

"HOLIDAYS AFLOAT FOR THE YOUNG

Foudroyant Preparing for "Season"

(By OUR NAVAL CORRESPONDENT)

The training ship Foudroyant, last surviving sailing frigate of the Royal Navy, is likely to be the first decorated vessel to come under the eyes of the Queen when she sails from Portsmouth Harbour to review her fleet on June 15.

Boys or girls who are on board at that time will have a very special reason to remember their holiday afloat.

Preparations are going on in Foudroyant now for the 1953 "season," and inquiries for accommodation and training are already reaching the ship.

Boys of Poole Grammar School are taking over the ship completely for one week in July, and other big schools are expected to do the same for other periods.

It is important to note, however, that training in Foudroyant is not restricted to organized parties or schools, and the committee is anxious to extend a welcome to individual "candidates."

The aim of the Foudroyant, formerly the Trincomalee, is to inculcate in the minds of boys and girls a love of the sea; thus sea-training and character-building are combined to make a healthy and enjoyable holiday.

RUSSIAN CAMPAIGN

Foudroyant has recently had a "change of command," Capt. "Joe" Blake, R.N. (retd.) having been succeeded by Commander M.S. Spalding, R.N. (retd.) as Superintendent.

In Commander Spalding the Foudroyant Committee has an exceptionally able and knowledgeable "skipper," for although he has spent a good deal of time at sea in destroyers, he has also held a number of what may be called semi-democratic posts. At one time he was employed by the Foreign Office as a King's Messenger.

At the Royal Naval College, Osborne, Commander Spalding was in the same term as Admiral Sir George Creasy and was there at the same time as the Duke of Windsor and the late King George VI.

After service at sea in World War I he was in the North Russian expedition in 1919, and at the age of 23 commanded a naval brigade on shore. He also commanded an Anglo-Russian brigade which was engaged in the only large scale operation in the campaign, 250 miles south of Archangel, covering the successful evacuation of the British forces which had intervened in the revolution.

OBSERVER IN SPAIN

Then followed a number of appointments in command of destroyers, and he retired in 1936.

From 1937-39 he served as an observer on the International Committee for Non-Intervention in Spain. He sailed in 24 ships of all nations and visited most of the Spanish ports of both sides.

Recalled to the Navy in 1939 he commanded a group of anti-submarine trawlers and later served on the staff of Commander-in-Chief, South Atlantic, at Freetown, finally retiring in 1945.

Mrs Spalding, who lives on board the Foudroyant with her husband, is the daughter of the late Mr. Craddock, joint master of the Old Berkshire Hunt. She proposes to take up sailing to add to her many sporting pastimes.

Their daughter, who has already "served" under training in the Foudroyant, is joining the W.R.N.S. This week.

Veteran member of the crew is Lieut. M. O'Loughlin, R.N.V.R., the chief officer, who has been associated with the Foudroyant, and before that the old wooden-walled Implacable, for more than 20 years. He has an experienced staff who are looking forward to a busy season ahead, and one in which they can use their energies in instructing boys and girls in the art of seamanship and the true spirit of comradeship."



Four members of the Girls' Nautical Training Corps climb the rigging of TS Foudroyant

Hartlepool Mail - August 1949



Sea Rangers signalling aboard TS Foudroyant

Hartlepool Mail - September 1949

Notice is hereby given of our:

Annual General Meeting 2018
Wednesday 26th September at 7.30pm
The Historic Quay, Hartlepool

AGENDA:

1. Welcome and apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held on 13^h September 2017
3. Chairman's report
4. Treasurer's report and accounts for the year ending 31st March 2018
5. Voting on three amendments to our Constitution, two arising from the dissolution of the Trincomalee Trust:

a) Presently:

4.1 The Management of the Friends shall be vested in the Committee comprising:

*Chairman, Honorary Secretary, Honorary Treasurer,
Two persons appointed by HMS Trincomalee Trust
Plus up to a maximum of six additional members*

RECOMMENDATION – Remove “Two persons appointed by HMS Trincomalee Trust”

b) Presently:

5.1 d. [the Committee shall have the power to:] fill any casual vacancy occurring in the membership of the Committee (other than those falling to be appointed by the Trust) for the remainder of the term of office of his/her predecessor

RECOMMENDATION – Remove “(other than those falling to be appointed by the Trust)”

c) A change to reflect the modern way of banking, presently:

7.1 (...) A bank account or bank accounts shall be opened on behalf of the Friends and all cheques drawn upon such an account or accounts shall require the signature of any two of the following Committee Members: Chairman, Secretary, Membership Secretary or Treasurer

RECOMMENDATION – Change to “A bank account or bank accounts shall be opened on behalf of the Friends. Three trustees will be appointed to be responsible for management of these accounts.”

6. Election of Trustees

7. Appointment of Honorary Auditor

8. Any other business (Notified to the Secretary prior to the meeting)

Members interested in joining the Committee are warmly encouraged to make themselves known to the Secretary of the “Friends”.

All candidates for election need be nominated by at least one one member of the present Committee.

The closing date for all nominations to be submitted to the Secretary is Friday 14th September 2018.

Ruth Turner, Hon. Secretary

Join the Friends of HMS Trincomalee

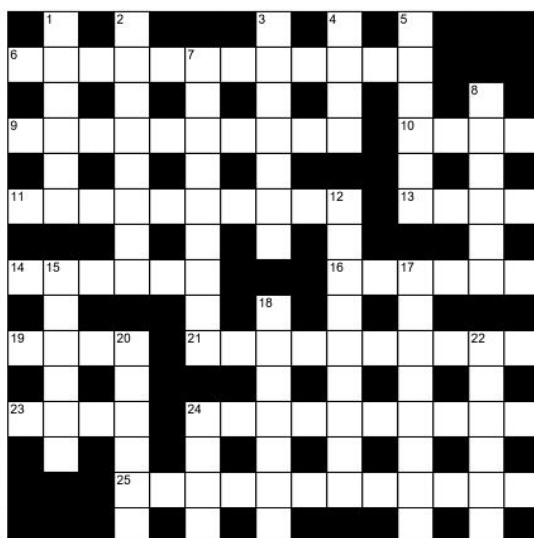
Your membership card entitles you to free recurrent admission to HMS Trincomalee and the Historic Quay for twelve months, and to attend Friends' events. You will receive the magazine Quarterdeck which is issued three times a year, and know that you are contributing to the upkeep and presentation of our Ship. Further details are on our website:

www.friendsofhmstrincomalee.org.uk



Mess Deck Crossword

Cryptic - Summer 2018



HDT

ACROSS

- 6 Miss the sailing's first trip (6,6)
- 9 Drunk on Adam's ale? (10)
- 10 Mariner went after His Excellency to the island (4)
- 11 Banes may give you wind (5,5)
- 13 Pole beats retreat (4)
- 14 Body picture which may be beaten (6)
- 16 A ship that is 9 across and 12 down should be this (6)
- 19 Gust wrecked boats (4)
- 21 Timely found in foreign seas on a blessed mission (10)
- 23 Port for trade (4)
- 24 Tune in late for officer at sea (10)
- 25 Yacht boarder cooked food (12)

DOWN

- 1 Vessel with a master on canal (6)
- 2 Attached short notice to this place of religious books (8)
- 3 Gel originating from Cog Lane (7)
- 4 Sailor is the Beetles' sargeant's mate (4)
- 5 Disorderly mess he knits (6)
- 7 Are scores kept in these? (9)
- 8 Ships that supply weapons to an American lawyer (6)
- 12 Could be both the admiral and his ship fit to go (9)
- 15 Corrupt practices a sailor employs (6)
- 17 Novices left the workers (8)
- 18 Call lad, he's needed at the wedding (7)
- 20 A rum affair when ordered for the mainbrace (6)
- 22 Spell measurement (6)
- 24 Bird left Noah's boat (4)

THE FRIENDS OFHMS TRINCOMALEE EVENTS

2018

26 September Wednesday	Annual General Meeting – see page 26 Followed with a presentation by: Reg Wright Chair of the Heugh Gun Battery Trust
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24 October Wednesday	“Some thoughts on the Global Context of the so-called Crimean War.” Mike Hinton
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28 November Wednesday	“The Real Story behind the Film, ‘Master and Commander.’” Nigel Hogg
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Unless otherwise stated all events take place at
the Historic Quay, Hartlepool at 7.00pm

Talks start at 7.30pm after refreshments
These events are free for Friends, guests charged £3 each.

friendsofhmstrincomalee.org.uk



25th Birthday Party for the Friends of HMS Trincomalee
23rd May 2018

