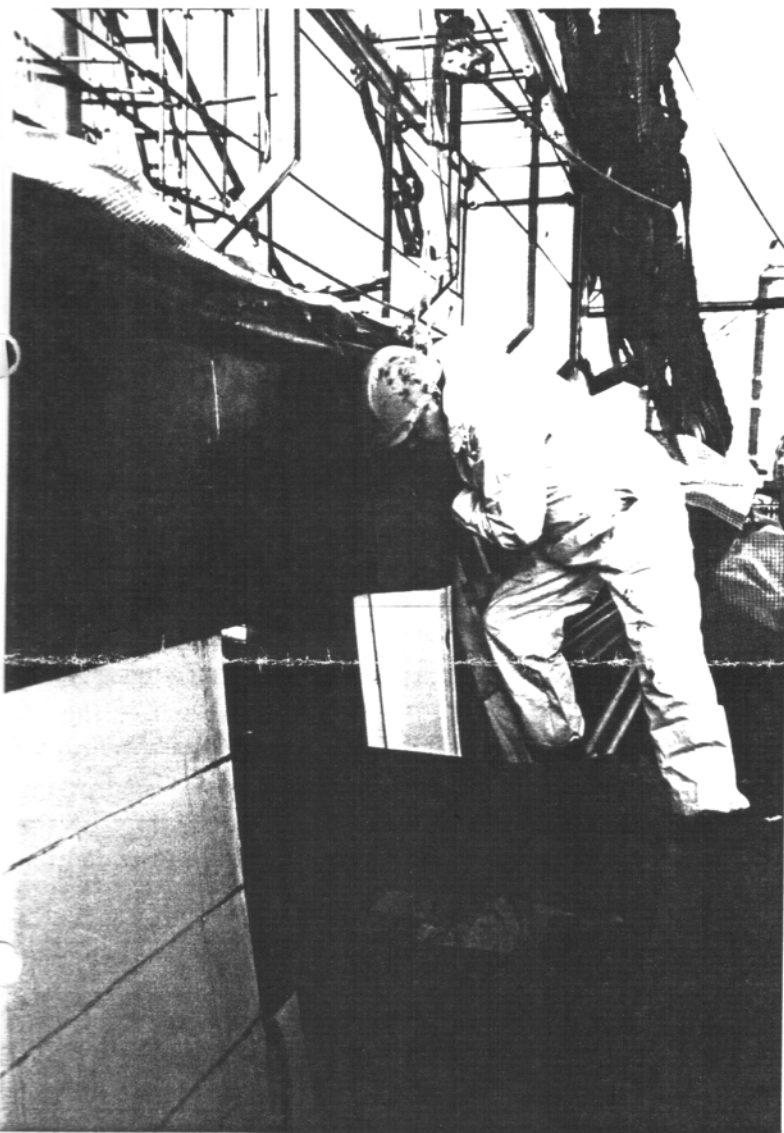




# Quarterdeck

The Newsletter of The Friends of HMS Trincomalee

July 1999



*Fitting chesstrees to the hull, starboard side – June 1999  
(photo HMS Trincomalee Trust)*

## AFLOAT AGAIN IN OCTOBER

With major restoration work on the outer hull now complete, it is planned to flood the drydock during the high spring tides in the last week of October and HMS Trincomalee will once more become the second oldest wooden warship afloat.

Whilst careful calculations have been done to establish the likely draft of the ship when the dock is flooded, and safety margins have been provided for, it has to be remembered that a substantial amount of work has been done on the ship since she was drydocked in August 1996. Nonetheless, the restoration team are confident that she will lift off the keel blocks with ample under-keel clearance not only to leave the drydock, but to allow some further weight to be added to the hull before she does.

Keen-eyed visitors to the ship will have noticed that draft markings have now been painted at bow and stern ready for this significant event.

Even though the ship may be floated in October, she will remain in the Historic Quay for the completion of her restoration, allowing time for the construction of her permanent moorings and visitor facilities in Jackson Dock.

## RESTORATION – TEN MONTHS TO COMPLETION

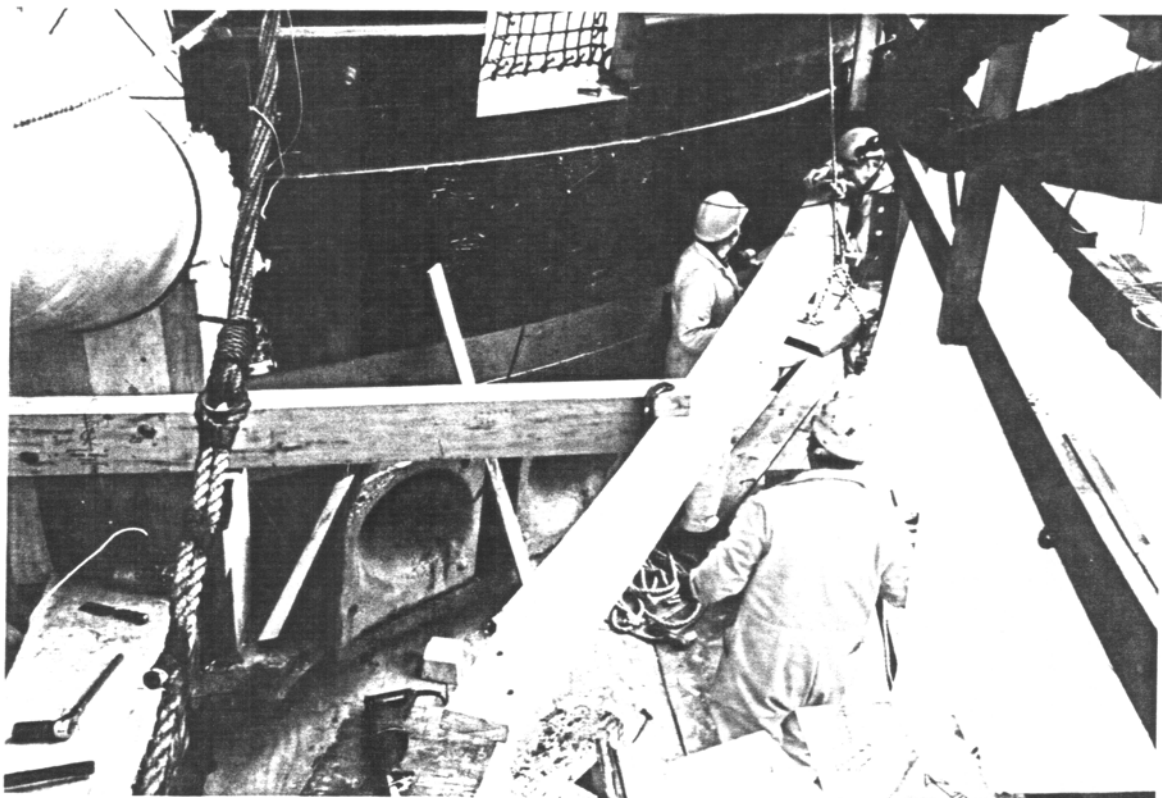
With just ten months left to complete the restoration of the ship by the target date of May 2000, work is proceeding well in line with expectations and some jobs are ahead of schedule.

All major restoration work on the outer hull has now been completed, the fenders, chesstrees, boat davits and steps

have been fitted and the hull above the coppering has been painted, which greatly enhances the look of the ship.

Much recent work has been done in the bow area, where the Knee of the Head has been restored and new head platform timbers fitted.

*Right:  
Reconstructing  
The Head  
Platform*



*(photo - HMS  
Trincomalee  
Trust)*

*(continued from front page)* The Bill Boards for the ship's bower anchors have been fitted, and the staging which has surrounded the hull is now being removed.

Work continues meantime below decks, where a number of upper deck beam knees and lower deck ledges have been replaced, internal side planking ("spircketting") is being fitted. Visitors can now once more gain access to part of the lower deck

where Chalky White is back with his ghostly reminiscences and Roland the electric rat can be seen endlessly gnawing on a chunk of hard tack.

Meantime drawings have been produced of the aft magazine in preparation for the reconstruction of this area during the next few months. The drawing office has also prepared detailed drawings of the carriages for the 9 pounder guns carried on the forecastle and quarterdeck.

## NEW FIGUREHEAD

Inspection of the distinctive bust head (as it is properly called), reputed to be a likeness of Jamsetjee Bomanjee Wadia, has revealed extensive and severe rot. It has been decided to remove the existing bust head (which is actually not original, but dates from 1845) and replace it with a new carving (a copy of the original) which should be ready before the autumn. The old bust head will be preserved and exhibited ashore.

Records show that the bust head cost 15s 3d to produce in 1845. The replacement will be slightly more expensive at about £20,000.....

*The bust head of  
HMS Trincomalee*



The Resolution Trust, based in Whitby, intends to build a replica of Capt James Cook's ship HM Sloop RESOLUTION. It is the hope of the Trustees that this fully equipped sailing replica will be based in Whitby, and will be capable of retracing Cook's voyages in the original RESOLUTION.

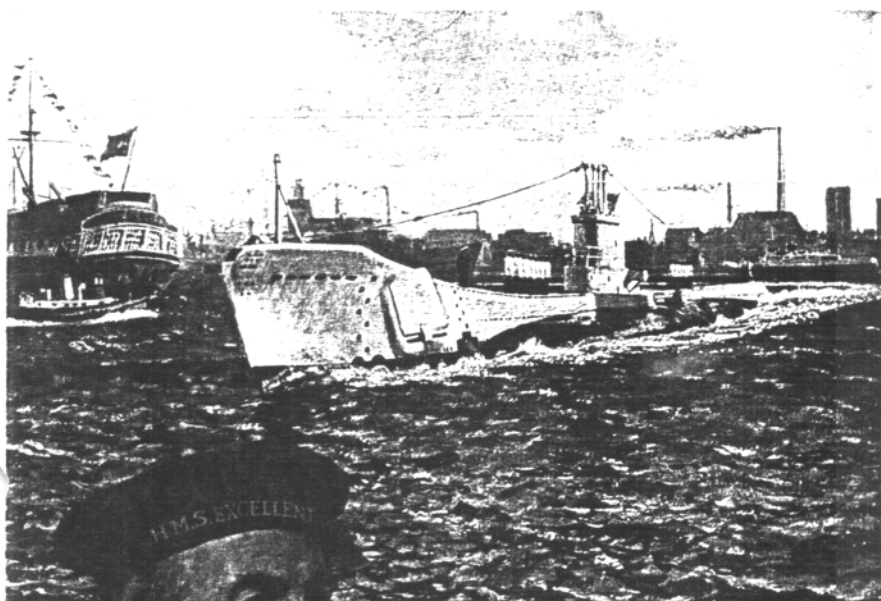
Built in Whitby in 1770 as a merchant ship, she was purchased by the Admiralty the following year and took Captain Cook on his second major voyage of exploration in 1772, during which he discovered and charted innumerable islands, visiting New Zealand, Samoa, Tonga, Tahiti, Easter Island and of course the Cook Islands, and, incidentally, carrying an experimental copy of John Harrison's famous chronometer.

built in Hartlepool, using the skills and knowledge of the team which has been restoring HMS TRINCOMALEE.

The dimensions of RESOLUTION will allow the hull to be constructed in the Historic Quay drydock where TRINCOMALEE is presently lying, and floated out of the Marina entrance to be towed to Whitby for rigging and fitting out.

This is an exciting and ambitious project which will cost an estimated £8 million, and which could provide continuity of employment in the specialised area of large wooden hulled ships for many of those currently working on TRINCOMALEE.

The Resolution Trust was launched in Whitby on May 18th 1999, and further information can be obtained from The Resolution Trust, 39a Flowergate, Whitby, North Yorks YO21 3BB or through the internet on its website at [www.resolutiontrust.demon.co.uk](http://www.resolutiontrust.demon.co.uk)



Before the government finally imposes a ban on tobacco advertising, we take the opportunity of reproducing a Players advertisement from the 1950s, kindly sent in by Brian Mitchell of Crawley.

It shows an A-class submarine, HMS Acheron, coming in to her moorings at Haslar, and in the left of the painting is the familiar stern of what was then TS Foudroyant, dressed overall for the occasion. The bearded tar in the foreground is not wearing the usual "HERO" cap tally of the Player's Navy Cut advertisements, but that of HMS EXCELLENT, Collingwood's ship at St. Vincent (1797), which in 1830 became a gunnery training establishment in Portsmouth.

It's a way they have in the Navy

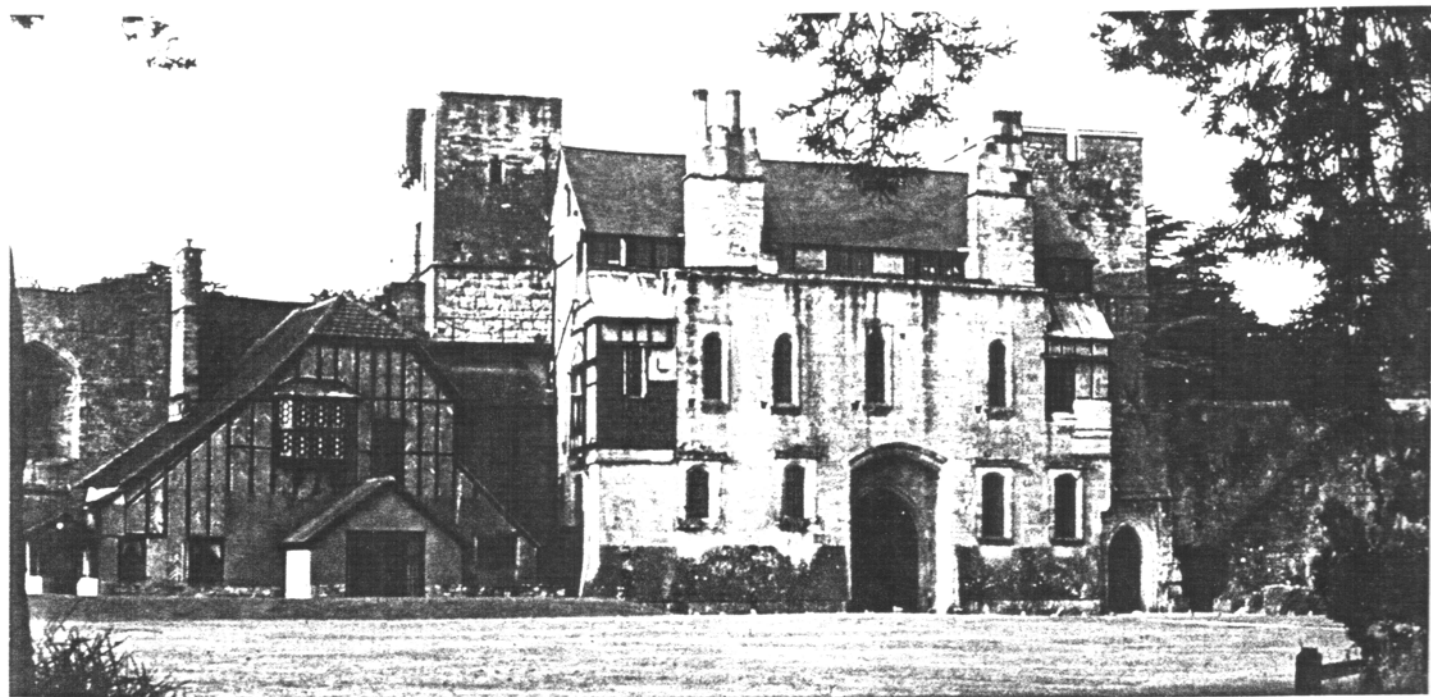
**True to tradition...**

tradition ...

Player's  
Please







*The 600 year old gatehouse of Caldicot Castle, built for Thomas of Woodstock and former home of the Cobb family*

## CALDICOT CASTLE

Geoffrey Wheatley Cobb, the man who originally saved HMS Trincomalee from the breaker's yard in 1897, lived at Caldicot Castle, not far from Chepstow in Monmouthshire. This fine castle, constructed originally by Humphrey de Bohun on the site of an earlier Motte & Bailey castle in the late 12th century, was bought by the Cobb family in 1885 and sympathetically restored by them at what must have been considerable expense, involving years of work by skilled masons. An entire team of Irish navvies dug out the moat, and the courtyard was transformed from a muddy farmyard into pleasant gardens with a swimming pool.

In 1963 the castle was bought from the Cobb family by Chepstow Rural District Council, and it is now open to the public. Laurie Merrin who recently visited the castle, recommends it to anyone visiting the area. Noel Tyrrell, our oldest member, who was aboard Foudroyant in Milford Haven in the 1920s recalls spending Christmas there with other trainees as guests of the Cobb family, sleeping in the somewhat draughty tower.

## BILL STEVENSON

We very much regret to announce the death, after a long illness, of Bill Stevenson, former senior technical officer who guided and managed the technical aspects of the restoration of the ship from its very beginnings. Bill was not only a skilled and knowledgeable man who enjoyed the work that he did, but was liked and admired by all who knew him.

The huge number of his friends who attended his funeral on April 29th was a fitting testimony to Bill, who will be remembered with affection by all of us.

## HOW TO GET THERE

Caldicot Castle is close to Junction 23 on the M4 and is open daily from March to October; Mon – Sat 10.30 to 5.00 and Sundays 1.30 to 5.00. As Laurie points out, it is not far from the Nelson Museum at Monmouth, which is also worth a detour



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