

Quarterdeck

FRIENDS OF HMS TRINCOMALEE

SUMMER 2004



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Message from the New Chairman Wade Tovey

I have the honour to have been elected as Chairman of the Friends of HMS Trincomalee. I have to say at the outset, that it is a particular privilege to follow in the footsteps of Nigel Hogg who has stepped down as Chairman after some 11 years work since the establishment of the Friends. Nigel has been a stalwart, not only in acting as Chairman but in doing so many other things with great diligence, imagination and an ever present sense of humour. This achievement is all the greater as he is a senior local Magistrate and is involved in many committees as well as running a flourishing business. I know that he wishes to continue to be involved, perhaps less frequently, but I hope we can tap into his interest in sailing ships and all things Naval, as this has shone through his talks and in his initiating, writing and producing the Quarterdeck which Jean Hughes has now taken on. Like many Friends I thoroughly enjoyed his talk on Cutlasses on one of the splendid events in the Captain's Cabin. The talks are long enough to make attendance worthwhile but not so long that the whole evening is lost. I very much hope you can join one of these evening talks, especially if you haven't done so before.

The Ship looks better than ever, and the achievement of the Silver Award nationally (see Trust's Log) is confirmation that the Trust really has a precious national heritage which it has looked after so well. We are delighted that you wish to continue to support us and encourage friends, relatives and acquaintances to join us in something that is unique, fascinating and a treasure to behold.

Any correspondence concerning the Friends Association should be sent to:

**The Secretary, Ian Purdy,
39 The Poplars, Wolviston, Billingham TS22 5LY
Tel: 01740 644381**

Membership matters directed to:

**Membership Secretary, Keith Rogers,
Tanglewood, Manor Garth Drive, Hartlepool, TS26 0LT
Tel: 01429 266126**

Correspondence and contributions for the magazine to:

**The Editor, c/o HMS Trincomalee,
Jackson Dock, Hartlepool, TS24 0SQ**

Hello Again

I hope you all enjoyed the first of the new style Quarterdeck in February. I have received some very kind comments about the new format and even some ideas for articles and additions to the magazine. Keep them coming!

A kind friend, Chris Bowers, lent me a book which has in it all the website addresses for historic ships and dockyards around the country. To save you time in surfing the net for these addresses here are a few of them and you may wish to visit one of these ships or dockyards on your journeys around the country this summer.

**www.hms-trincomalee.co.uk - www.cuttysark.org.uk - www.historicdockyard.co.uk
www.ss-great-britain.com - www.rrsdiscovery.com - www.frigateunicorn.org**

One of the articles in this magazine is by Captain Richard Woodman. He is a very good friend of the Friends. Richard is the author of the Nathaniel Drinkwater novels and his article about being a Friend and the filming he has taken part in on board is both entertaining and informative. Enjoy! (I did). Do look in the Shipshop for the DVDs and Videos.

I have been informed that after an inspection of the upper rigging last year it has been found that some of it needs replacing. Bryn and Les (Ship Superintendent) have been investigating the use of synthetic materials and a contractor who is able to do this unusual work. I then thought that it might be an idea to ask someone who knows about these things to write an article about rigging. Who better to turn to than Captain David Smith who was the guiding force and leading light behind the restoration. I am sure that you will find his article informative. (I've learned a lot).

There is also another fact finding page of "Do you know that". These facts have been kindly written by Professor Andrew Lambert (author of "Trincomalee - The Last of Nelson's Frigates"). So they must be right! The facts are concerning the Trincomalee's second commission. Perhaps I can ask Andrew to do some facts about her first commission for the next magazine. Hmmmm.

Those of you that did not come to the AGM missed a treat!!! After we had done with the proper business of the evening we were shown some old videos of the Foudroyant at Portsmouth and clips of training days with youngsters and visits by HRH Princess Margaret in circa 1952. We also saw a clip of some modern film and a recently made video for the American market which is mentioned in Captain Richard Woodman's piece. We then had a slide presentation showing some of the restoration. These slides form part of Bryn's community slide show that he shows to all local groups in the area. (those who ask him!).

For information Colonel Wade Tovey was voted in as Chairman with James Atkinson as Vice Chairman. All other officers stayed the same but two new members were welcomed onto the committee - Gary Kester, technical wizard from Hartlepool College who devised the Trincomalee web site and John Megson who is a retired business man and very keen to promote business in Teesside and a great friend of the Trincomalee.

Jean Hughes, Magazine Editor

Trincomalee Facts – Do You Know that:

- HMS Trincomalee had two major commissions
- The second commission began in 1852 and covered the Pacific Station
- The Pacific Station covered the largest ocean area of any British command
- The Station included Cape Horn, the Bering Straits, Hawaii and the extreme east of Russia within its boundaries. Trincomalee visited them all.
- Both the Ship and her Captain, Wallace Houston, have left their names on the coast of British Columbia, on passages and channels surveyed at that time.
- Trincomalee was one of the last ships to be commissioned under the old system of raising a crew for each commission. By the time she paid off again all naval ratings were entered for ten or twenty years service.
- Trincomalee collided with a merchant ship at Port Stanley in the Falkland Islands.
- Trincomalee's crew included a number of men with a drink problem. Blacksmith Mr Beer repeatedly reduced in rank for being drunk and another seaman. Robert Gullett died of alcohol poisoning.
- Trincomalee spent several months at Hawaii.
- Captain Houston identified Pearl Harbour as an ideal naval base, but the entrance was then only 12 feet deep, so it could not be used.
- The Crimean War, 1854 – 1856 included fighting in the Pacific. Trincomalee saw no action although ships from her squadron did go into battle at Petropavlosk in 1854. Trincomalee was left to protect British interests in British Colombia.
- Trincomalee's crew helped to defuse a native American crisis on Vancouver Island.
- After nearly five years in commission Trincomalee arrived home having covered over 110,000 miles under sail.
- While the ship was being placed in reserve at Chatham, Able Seaman Alex MacDonald fell overboard and drowned.
- Neither Trincomalee, nor her Captain ever served at sea again but both enjoyed long and useful retirements. Houston lived until 1891 but his ship, having sailed the seven seas is still here to connect us with the many worlds that HMS Trincomalee visited.

Facts supplied by Professor Andrew Lambert, Professor of Naval History at King's College, London.

Trust's Log



Colonel Michael Stewart, Chairman of the Trust [centre] and Bryn Hughes, General Manager, with Judith Chalmers at the Excellence in England Awards.

Courtesy HMS Trincomalee Trust

In April the Trust was shortlisted in the national Excellence in England Tourism 'Oscars' following our Northumbria regional win last year. The presentations were made in the magnificent surroundings of the State Apartments in Kensington Palace where the Trust picked up a Silver Award in the category of best tourist attraction with less than 100,000 visitors annually.

This was the first time that an attraction from the region had been shortlisted for the national finals and the first time that any maritime attraction had reached the finals in the competition's 14 year history. It was a great reflection on everyone associated with the Ship and the Trust.

I wrote in the last Magazine about the exciting plans we have been pursuing for a Visitor Centre/Museum at Jackson Basin. More recently we have been exploring an alternative concept with Hartlepool Borough Council that would keep the Ship afloat in the dock at the Historic Quay and provision made at the Quay for the exhibitions and other essential facilities for the Trust.

The logic goes something like this. A number of common facilities could be shared or enhanced, including reception, gift shop, education etc., there could be a single ticket to cover all amenities and the Trust's shoreside land could still provide

compatible development, which in this case would give an on-going income to the Trust. As with most organisations in heritage these days we are concerned about sustainability – literally keeping the ‘boat afloat’ – and having sufficient reliable funds to maintain and conserve HMS Trincomalee and in presenting her for the public’s education and enjoyment. The Council has similar concerns about its own amenities, and thus a “working together”, whilst retaining autonomy, is certainly worth exploring. We are also taking the opportunity to seek specialist technical advice to examine options with the damboard, as this is a limiting factor in movements in and out of the dock and in the presentation of the Ship.



*The winning crew!
Courtesy HMS Trincomalee Trust*

No decision has been taken on these matters as yet, and the original shoreside development concept remains an option. The Trust, of course, has to be mindful that having restored the Ship so wonderfully, it has a duty of care to ensure that those who follow can derive the same pleasure from her. Some of you will remember [before my time!] that the Historic Quay was built by the former Teesside Development Corporation specifically as a home for HMS Trincomalee. These are interesting times!

There has been recent correspondence between the Trust and Rear Admiral Krishnan, the Admiral Superintendent of the Mumbai [Bombay] Dockyard where HMS Trincomalee was built in 1817. The Dockyard was established in 1735 and in recent times there has been a programme of restoration of many of the old structures and visitors can now be taken on a heritage walk within the area. Just a few months ago the Dockyard was presented with an award by the World Ship Trust, and we have also learned that the Indian Navy intends to make a replica of the Ship's Bust Head and display it within the Dockyard, thus establishing further connections between us.

Bryn Hughes, *General Manager*

The Adventures of a Friend

I have a curious sense of having graduated in my relationship with His Britannic Majesty's frigate Trincomalee. I first made the ship's acquaintance when a sixteen year old sea-scout. As one of eighteen boys I had been selected to crew the British sea-scout entry in the Tall Ships Race of 1960. On one of our early summer training weekends we were lying in Portsmouth. In fact, I recall, we manned the side and cheered ship as Britannia arrived back from the West Indies, with HRH The Princess Margaret and Lord Snowdon on board for their honeymoon cruise. I was rather more fascinated by the cut down, and built up, frigate which lay off the Royal Clarence Victualling Yard, being an ardent fan of all sailing vessels, even those no longer capable of going to sea. T.S.Foudroyant, as she then was, was not particularly graceful for she floated too high in the water, had lost all but vestigial spars and her profile had been altered. But she was a fascinating link with the past.

I was next to encounter her when, many years later, I was part of a Trinity House team asked to carry out an audit aboard her. We had lunch in her great cabin before rummaging around the ship armed with pens and clip-boards. I followed her decommissioning as a training ship and transfer to Hartlepool with passing interest and then, somewhere around 1982, I was asked to write an article about her. This was the first time I had taken a serious interest in the history of the ship that lay beneath the overlain identity of 'Foudroyant'. I knew the Nelson connection was spurious, and I knew of the intervention of Mr Wheatley Cobb and the loss of the original Foudroyant on Blackpool beach. In fact I had long had a picture of the old French line-of-battleship laying forlorn upon the sands off Blackpool, but I had taken little notice of the frigate that lay lurking beneath the coats of paint she had acquired since Wheatley Cobb purchased her as a replacement for his lost French prize.

Work on her restoration had hardly started as I clambered over her early one morning. It was a timely meeting with the old ship for I had already written the first two of my Drinkwater stories, *An Eye of the Fleet* and *A King's Cutter*. In the first, my hero had been sent a midshipman aboard the frigate Cyclops in 1779, rather earlier than the first of the Leda-class's lines had first been laid down in a mould-loft and indeed three years before the capture of the Hebe from which they were cribbed. Nevertheless I was aware of a strong sense of atmosphere as I poked round the empty ship and I felt the hairs on the back of my neck straighten. It is a curious conceit, but I have always believed that Nathaniel Drinkwater actually existed, an unknown sea-officer, whose biography was necessarily 'retransmitted' through my own imagination. He is in stark contrast with Jack Aubrey, whose life has been pinched wholesale from the real lives of real people, a point I once mildly suggested to Patrick O'Brian.

I was not to see Trincomalee for some years which, in its way, was a good thing, for by the time I next visited Hartlepool she was like a thing reborn. I am not a practical man in the sense that I can fashion a piece of wood in anything other than the crudest sense, so the change impressed me enormously. This was hardly the same vessel; in fact it was almost impossible to imagine she had one been the rather forlorn, superannuated inhabitant of Portsmouth harbour. Hitherto she had been living under an alias; Foudroyant was not really her name at all. Now here was a ship

worthy of the name of a frigate with all that it conjures up in the imagination. Nelson might never have seen her, but he had set eyes on plenty of men-of-war of her ilk.

Now I found myself being asked by a film company to appear as a talking head in a television programme about Lord Cochrane. Trincomalee lay vivid in the background. Consequently my sense of identity with the ship increased and I became a Friend; it did not seem right to take advantage of her in so shamelessly commercial a way without putting a mite or two back into her.

Last year I was back on board with a film team from Dallas. Chip Richie of Richie Film Productions wanted to make a documentary for the American home video market about the Royal Navy in the age of sail, tying history in with genre of novels it had produced, from those of Captain Frederick Marryat, himself a midshipman under Lord Cochrane in the *Imperieuse*, by way of the books of C.S. Forrester, Alexander Kent, Dudley Pope, Patrick O'Brian, Julian Stockwin and myself. Richie had picked up my name owing to a book I had written called *The Sea Warriors*.



*Captain Richard Woodman dressed for filming "Worst Jobs in History" –
Courtesy Jean Hughes*

Having written fourteen novels about Nathaniel Drinkwater, I had branched out into non-fiction and *The Sea Warriors* was intended to take a look at the reality of cruiser warfare – by which I meant the employment of frigates – between 1793 and 1815. Strictly speaking Trincomalee lies outside this time-frame, but she is well able to provide the ideal location for such a project as Richie had conceived. It was not long before I found myself presenting, direct to camera, a succinct précis of the many duties of a frigate during the long struggle with Revolutionary and Napoleonic France. In this I was helped by the marvellous enthusiasm of the Historic Maritime Society. The deep and arcane knowledge the Society's members have of detailed aspects of the life aboard men-of-war in this period is staggeringly impressive. From surgery to diet, from navigation to intricate seamanship, these people are wonderfully knowledgeable. Their ability to assume the characters of Georgian Britons goes far beyond the mere donning of period costume; one is almost persuaded that they are reincarnations of our predecessors. I found myself wondering how they coped with modern life until I watched them pack their gear and drive off in their cars at the end of the filming.

During an eventful weekend we fired cannon and muskets, ate salt-pork in the berth deck, amputated an arm, planned a raid on the enemy's coast and, of course, flogged a seaman.

Trincomalee was only one of the locations where Richie's small team worked. From Hartlepool we filmed street scenes in Whitby. We travelled down to Charlestown in Cornwall, where some shots of several square riggers gave an extension of our period atmosphere and allowed some mast climbing; we visited the New Forest where a few examples of Quercus Roba were impressively splendid, before passing to Buckler's Hard and recalling Agamemnon and Indefatigable. From the New Forest we filmed one morning aboard Victory before morning colours were hoisted, ending the day at Chatham Dockyard, a prodigious feat of driving for an Englishman, but small beer

to Texans. Perhaps most moving were the hours we spent in the Old Admiralty Boardroom where we filmed Tom Pocock and Andrew Lambert before we set up our camera in Douglas Reeman's house, whereupon he generously turned himself into Alexander Kent for the purpose of our visit. Julian Stockwin was interviewed on the quay at Falmouth with the Endeavour Replica as his backdrop, and the following day Richie and his team sailed in the bark to get some shots under sail. It was a frantic and busy week, enormously enjoyable and the finished product, aptly named *The Sea Warriors* is available from the Trincomalee's shop in video or DVD form.

I had, I felt, climbed about as high as I could get aboard the old ship, but I was wrong. A few months later BBC Radio Scotland asked if I would take part in a programme cleverly called *Cooking the Books*. It sought to recreate memorable meals from a number of books which varied from those written by authors as disparate as Jane Austen and Ian Fleming. For our part, we would re-invent an early 19th Century meal out of one of O'Brian's novels and ate it in Trinco's cabin. This was social elevation of a high order. With me were Jean and David, the former an expert foodie of the period who cooked us, amongst other delights, lobsouse and wim-wams, and supplied us with a head-nailing brew of shrub. David meanwhile expounded on the dangers of scurvy and the measures found to combat it by the Royal Navy. I was largely employed to grunt – in period style, of course – at the excellence of the provender. Surely, I now thought as my stomach coped with its unusual lading, a man can progress no further? It had wanted only Nelson himself to ask me to pass the salt, to be a perfect climax to my association with the old ship.



Tony Robinson and Bryn Hughes on the Gun Deck during filming "Worst Jobs in History" – Courtesy of Jean Hughes

Again I was wrong. A few weeks ago I was asked to take part in another filming session. Tony Robinson was making a series called the *Worst Jobs in History* and the Historic Maritime Society was again taking part. They had mentioned my name and I was asked to turn up, only to find myself pressed into period costume and instructed to play the part of the ship's captain. With stick and sword I paced the quarterdeck in near freezing conditions, lost in a fantasy world of total make-believe so that it came as rather a nasty shock to be filmed telling Mr Robinson that he was no damned good to me on my ship as he was no sailor and would

therefore serve as a loblolly-boy. This, of course, was one of the worst jobs in history. Later Tony struggled in the stygian gloom below, helping Mr Surgeon Harrison dig a musket ball out of a marine's back. I don't think he had half the fun that I did, for all the icy blasts and the hail that from time-to-time swept across the quarterdeck, causing the ship to heel in the gusts.

Devil take it, sir, it was just like the real thing!

News, Happenings and Events

Dates for your Diary – (*put them in NOW!!!!*)

19 June Summer Soiree – 7.00pm on board Ship

To be opened by Pippa Gregory. Pippa returned to Hartlepool about 18 months ago. She is a best selling author (latest book “The Queen’s Fool”) and well known scriptwriter (her latest was on BBC2 – “The Other Boleyn”). When she previously lived in Hartlepool she was the founder of Hartlepool People – a charitable organisation who organised various events for those who are out of work.

Also featuring on the night – Hartlepool Youth and Community Band, The Choir of Manor School and College of Technology and The Band and Guard of Honour of TS Trincomalee Sea Cadet Unit.

The ticket price includes a superb buffet (if last year’s buffet is anything to go by).

Tickets – Adult £12.50; Child £6.00. (Tickets available from George Brown 01287 623213)

2,3,4 July Hartlepool Maritime Festival (see Claire Munroe’s article)

(Some Friends will be on board the Ship to talk to visitors – look out for the T shirt – would you like to help – contact Ian Purdy)

Friends Talks – *In the Captain’s Cabin.*

Talk at 7.00pm. Coffee and biscuits afterwards. Free to members and non members pay £1.00. **DON’T FORGET THERE IS A RAFFLE!!!**

September 23 “Fighting Ships of the World” Les Cheyne

October 21 “Further up the Tees” Edward Bunting

November 11 “Tramping in a Reefer” Captain Sandy Kinghorn

NEWS BULLETIN

James Atkinson recently applied for a grant from Awards for All on behalf of the Friends and successfully obtained £4834.00, **WOW!** This money will help purchase some necessary items for Friends events - an awning to go over the quarterdeck (on the Ship not the Friends magazine!) – first viewing Summer Soiree; tables; chairs; vacuum flasks and crockery (for coffees on talks nights) and an on board sound system.

Congratulations and thanks to James for all his hard work in obtaining this money.

Hartlepool Maritime Festival

2, 3, 4 July 2004

The plans for the Hartlepool Maritime Festival have emerged bigger and better for 2004 after the successes already achieved in 2000 and 2002.

The level of involvement from key partners and community groups in Hartlepool has increased dramatically with many wanting to be involved for the first time in addition to those established contributors. The Festival has also broadened to include the historic Headland area and Seaton Carew.

The magnificent replica of Captain Cook's ship H.M. Bark Endeavour will be sailing into Hartlepool on the morning of Saturday 3 July. It will pass close to shore from Redcar to Seaton Carew and will then be officially welcomed to Hartlepool. She will be accompanied all the way by a flotilla of local small craft. This will be a stunning sight and it is expected that thousands of people will cheer Endeavour and her entourage on her way. There will be an opportunity to board the ship when tickets go on sale to the public.

There will be a real international and multi-cultural feel to the 2004 event with another first:- a French market consisting of approximately 35 stalls selling a wide range of traditional goods including food, wine, sauces and spices, basketwork and crafts. The market will be open from Friday 2 July until Sunday 4 July.

There will be a packed programme of other events and activities to enjoy including those in the air as well as on sea and land. Many exhilarating water activities, dramatic air displays, entertaining international street theatre, maritime themed inflatables and funfair, a two-day multi-cultural music stage, craft and trade stands and much, much more.

2005 is SeaBritain Year. The Hartlepool Maritime Festival this July is the perfect occasion to whet your appetite for more. This is one of the major festivals in the Tees Valley – a celebration of Hartlepool's maritime heritage while looking ahead to an exciting future.



*Watch where you point that thing!
On board HMS Trincomalee –
Maritime Festival 2000
Courtesy of Jean Hughes*

Things to LOOK OUT for

- * The first ever visit to Hartlepool by Captain Cook's H.M. Bark Endeavour
- * Sailing trip on-board the Bark Endeavour - Captain Cook Experience
- * A three-day French market selling Gallic food, wines and crafts
- * A two-day music stage programmed by Hartlepool's live music venue, 'The Studio'
- * A feast of spectacular Street Theatre and colourful street decorations
- * England versus France in dramatic Royal Marine and Battle of Trafalgar re-enactments
- * Family Fun Fair, Bouncy Castle and Craft Marquee
- * Water Sports and Activities including Trick Ski and Jet Ski Demonstrations
- * Free entry to the Historic Quay and HMS Trincomalee
- * Celebratory Fireworks Display

For more details please telephone 01429 869706

Claire Munroe
Marketing Officer, Hartlepool Borough Council

*Part of the Parade during the
Maritime Festival 2002*

Courtesy of Jean Hughes



The Rigging Of

Hms Trincomalee 1817-2004

When Trincomalee was launched on 12 October 1817 she was fitted "for but not with" masts and rigging. These had to be fitted when she was prepared for sea. The normal procedure was to lay the vessel alongside a rigging hulk which was fitted with long sheer legs so that the masts could be hoisted into a vertical position and lowered into the hull – an operation known as masting the Ship. Once the masts were properly located in the hull they were "stepped"; and then held securely in place where they passed through decks by means of wedges. As with all frigates and larger vessels she was "ship rigged" with 3 masts – a foremast, mainmast and mizzen crossed with yards carrying square sails. Trincomalee was initially fitted out with temporary masts and rigging at Bombay prior to sailing for England under escort for delivery to the fleet. By the time she arrived in Portsmouth on 30 April 1819 the tension between France and England in the wake of the Napoleonic Wars had eased and the Admiralty decided to put her into reserve. The temporary masts, rigging and ordnance were removed. She was roofed over and remained in care and maintenance in the reserve fleet for the next 26 years.

In 1847 Trincomalee was brought forward for active service. She was fitted with a permanent outfit of masts, yards, rigging and ordnance and commissioned with a full complement of ships company for service on distant stations. With her full outfit she would have had 2 or possibly 3 complete sets of sails – 12 square sails to bend from her yards and 11 fore and aft sails to set from her rigging, giving 17,000 square feet of canvas in total. Her best speed recorded was 17 knots, although with a fair wind 14 or 15 was more usual under full sail.

After over 8 years of active service her period with the fleet was at an end and she was towed alongside a rigging hulk for the removal of her masts and yards. Whilst sail was giving way to steam in the fleet there was, however, still a role for her in the training service.

In the training service it was usual to fit ships with a single mainmast with one or two yards and modified rigging, sufficient to permit sail drill in low wind conditions whilst the ship remained stationery in her berth. Drill ships were used to train Naval Volunteers and were stationed in all the main ports in the country and in this new role Trincomalee was stationed at West Hartlepool from 1862 until 1877 after which she was reduced to reserve at Portsmouth and was sold in 1897 for breaking up.

The philanthropist G Wheatley Cobb purchased Trincomalee as a replacement for his ship HMS Foudroyant. He refitted her for her new role as a nautical training ship for boys with the same rigging as for a Drill Ship and he renamed her Foudroyant. The Ship remained in this configuration until training came to an end at Portsmouth in 1986 when the ship was taken to Hartlepool, her old home, for restoration.

Once restoration commenced at Hartlepool in 1990 the main topmast and yard was

struck and the mainmast stripped out. By August 1996 the hull had been restored above the waterline and for the first time in 139 years, the Ship proudly carried 3 masts with standing rigging in place. Once in dock for underwater restoration, work to cross the yards commenced. The policy was to restore the vessel to her mid 18th century configuration: not only did this require reversion to her earlier name Trincomalee but also to consider how traditional methods of masting and rigging should be modified in the light of materials available today as well as ease of maintenance, appearance and cost.

Metal masts and spars were chosen for ease of maintenance and longevity with the added bonus of being much lighter than the wooden equivalent. Heritage considerations required the visual appearance of the rigging cordage to be authentic. On choosing manila hemp cordage for the standing rigging, cost, suitability, availability and historic authenticity had to be taken into account as well as discussions with the rope industry as some 11 miles of cordage is required to rig a frigate. First quality hemp could be obtained at half the price of synthetic cordage which at the time produced an overall saving of £140,000. Manufacturers could not guarantee to supply the larger sizes of the synthetic cordage particularly 96mm and 80mm and synthetic rope was more expensive, suffered from stretch and life expectancy had yet to be determined. Wire rope was also considered. It was discarded because in re-creating the rigging plan of the period it was not possible to work wire around blocks and through dead eyes; nor could it be "turned in" as with manila. Since wire rope is thinner than natural cordage its visual impact would not have been so good. There was also cordage of smaller diameter with steel wire at the centre, called combination, to be considered. It was not easy to maintain and difficult to examine internally. Having absorbed technical advice from industry the Trust finally decided to use manila hemp, providing it could be preserved satisfactorily to give good life expectancy. A product called Ambersil was recommended for its penetrative protective qualities, although after a few years this treatment has not lived up to its expectations and further research is under trial.

The Ship's Conservation Plan lays down planned maintenance routines. The result of a survey in 2003 showed that some deterioration in the rigging was evident. It was apparent that deterioration is occurring mostly in the manila hemp of the upper rigging, which is already about 10 years old and approaching the end of its estimated service life. Consideration is therefore being given to re-assessing the most cost effective alternative in terms of strength, ease of maintenance, visual impact and capital cost. Progress in the manufacture of pre-stretched polypropylene cable laid rope with ultra violet light (UV) protection is now likely to be the favoured choice. The epoxy painted galvanised metal masts and yards are proving very successful with no sign of corrosion. Almost maintenance free the decision to use metal with hardwood facings has been fully justified. The most important single factor in the maintenance cycle is to sustain a small experienced workforce without whom this glamorous heritage asset will not be able to provide future generations with a fair and rare example of a frigate from our glorious naval past.

Captain David T. Smith



HMS TRINCOMALEE TRUST

The HMS Trincomalee Trust is the Charitable Company that maintains and conserves the Ship. We operate the day to day public use of the Ship for general visits, functions, meetings and weddings, and also run the ShipShop.

***All profits from the ShipShop help us to maintain
HMS Trincomalee.***

***There is an expanding range of souvenirs to choose from
and you can order through***

our website: www.hms-trincomalee.co.uk

There are discounts for the Friends of the Ship.

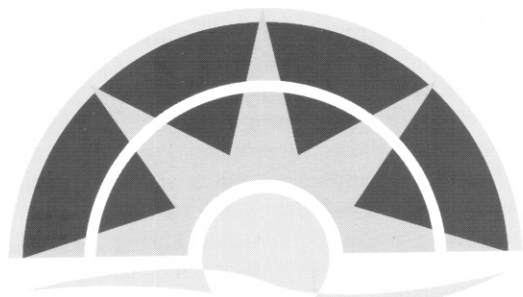
Please contact the Trust for details:

HMS Trincomalee Trust, Jackson Dock, Hartlepool TS24 0SQ.

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