

# Quartermasterdeck

FRIENDS OF HMS TRINCOMALEE

£1.00

SUMMER 2009

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**Horwath Clark Whitehill**

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# Editorial

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This edition starts with an unsolved mystery relating to when HMS Trincomalee was on her second commission in the coastal waters of British Columbia. It reveals something of the character of the native population of that time, and the sort of incident that the ship got involved with in her 'policing' role.

I thank Sandy Kinghorn for providing me with the preface from the 'Boy's Manual of Seamanship and Gunnery'. It does sound similar in tone to Robert Baden-Powell's 'Scouting for Boys' publication of 1908 with which Friends may be more familiar.

In addition to the published members' letters, I have had mailings from three Friends with snippets of shanties they are in the process of writing. It looks as though this will be an ongoing item. I have provided a verse in long haul shanty form for this edition to urge others to have a go.

Prince Philip's visit to the Ship in March has provided the front cover photograph, and there is more about this in the Trust's Log. Any ideas what Captain Smith and Prince Philip were saying when the photograph was taken?

Finally the committee of the Friends is looking for fresh blood, so if you are interested in joining the committee and becoming a trustee of the friends please feel free to contact the chairman or secretary to find out more. There are about ten committee meetings a year.

**Hugh Turner** (*Editor*)

*Any correspondence concerning the Friends Association should be sent to:*

**The Secretary, Ruth Turner**

*Correspondence and contributions for the magazine to:*

**The Editor, Hugh Turner**

*Both at:*

**Chevin House, 30 Kingfisher Close, Bishop Cuthbert, Hartlepool TS26 0GA  
E-Mail: TrincomaleeFriends@tiscali.co.uk**

*Membership matters directed to:*

**Membership Secretary, Keith Rogers**

**Tanglewood, Manor Garth Drive, Hartlepool TS26 0LT  
Tel: 01429 266126**

# *The Curious Case of the Susan Sturges*



*Modern Day  
Northern coastal  
British Columbia*

During her second commission of 1852-1857 HMS Trincomlee spent time in the coastal waters of modern-day British Columbia under the captaincy of Wallace Houston. This was an outpost of the empire ruled by the fur trading Hudson's Bay Company which was founded in the seventeenth century, however by the mid-nineteenth century it was threatened by its American and Russian neighbours and the local native population. The Company preferred a Royal Navy presence and the Colonial office considered it 'highly desirable that a ship of war should frequently visit Vancouver's Island.'

One instance of HMS Trincomalee in a 'policing' role relates to the attack by native Indians on the American trading schooner 'Susan Sturges' off Rose Point in the Queen Charlotte Islands.

Registered in San Francisco, the Susan Sturges was a small schooner (122 tons, length 81 feet, beam 22 feet, draft 7 feet) trading between the Queen Charlotte Islands and San Francisco in the early 1850s, and she participated in British Columbia's first gold rush in the Queen Charlotte Islands in 1851.

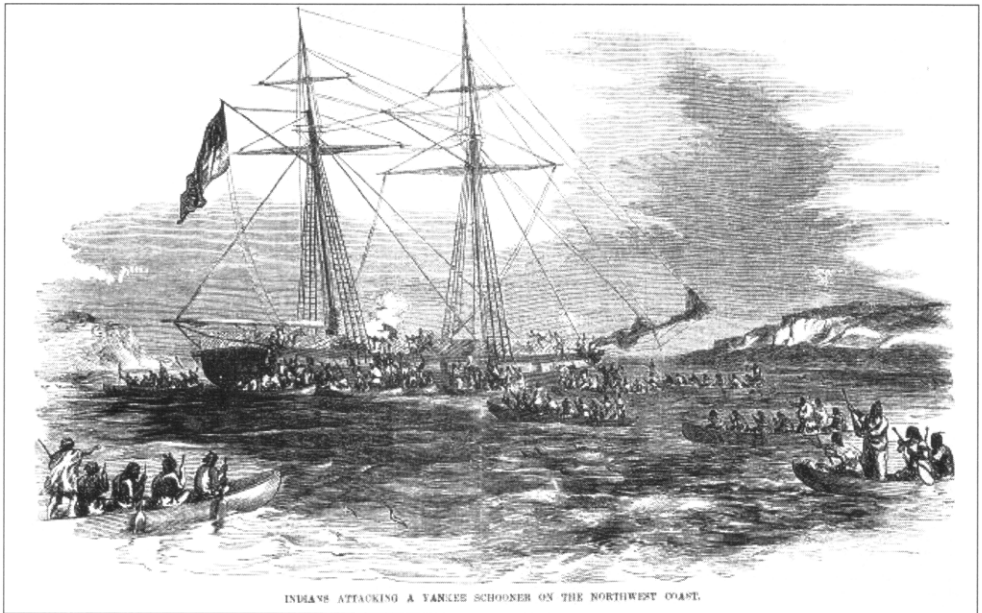
In 1852 the ship's captain, Matthew Rooney, was looking for a pilot familiar with the coastal waters around the Queen Charlotte Islands and sought out the native Indian Chief called Edenshaw based at Kung, near Naden Harbour.

Chief Edenshaw was born in about 1810 in Gatlinskun Village on Graham Island, and engaged himself in the coastal trade in Indian slaves, acquired by the natives



from neighbouring native peoples by raid or barter. By 1850 he possessed twelve slaves, receiving ten more from his bride's father when he married Ga'wu aw, a high ranking Haida woman from Alaska. Edenshaw knew the local waters intimately and was constantly in demand. Ships not only faced navigational dangers, but also raids by the Haidas, who were known to plunder vessels in difficulty.

Captain Rooney found Edenshaw at Skidegate and picked him up to return him to his village of Kung. Near Rose point on Graham Island, whilst en route to Kung, the schooner encountered a canoe from Masset and there was an exchange of words between Edenshaw and the Masset Chief, Weah, on board the canoe; Rooney did not know the language spoken. The following day one hundred and fifty of the Masset Haida led by Chief Weah in their canoes captured, pillaged and burned the Susan Sturges enslaving her crew.



INDIANS ATTACKING A VANCEL SCHOONER ON THE NORTHWEST COAST.

A document presented to Edenshaw by Captain Rooney gives the following account:

*Port Simpson, October 10, 1852*

*The bearer of this, Edenshaw, is chief of the tribe of Indians residing on North Island, I have reason to know that he is a good man, for he had been the means of saving the lives of me and my crew, who were attacked by Masset Indians off the Harbour of that name. He and his wife and child were on board that vessel coming from Skidegate Harbour round to North Island, when on September 26, 1852, we were surprised by some canoes alongside. We were so overpowered by numbers and so sudden the attack, that all resistance on our part was quite impossible, but after gaining the cabin, this man and his wife and two or three of his men who happened to come off in a small canoe, protected us for seven hours until he made some terms with which he brought to Fort Simpson and gave to me without ever asking for*

*any remuneration. I hope that if this should be shown to any master of a ship, that he will treat him well, for he deserves well at the hands of every White man.*

*Matthew Rooney*

*Former master of the schooner 'Susan Sturgis'*

The release of the prisoners to the Hudson Bay Company at Fort Simpson had actually been obtained by their chief trader, John Work, by paying in blankets. Work and other whites who knew these Indians were of the opinion that Edenshaw was party to the whole affair.

The Royal Navy vessels HMS Virago and HMS Trincomalee conducted separate investigations into the incident. The Commander of HMS Virago, James C. Prevost, could not prove directly Edenshaw's complicity in the Susan Sturges affair, but he had no doubt about his share in the plunder and took every precaution against the likelihood of Edenshaw attacking his own ship whilst he was detained for questioning on the Virago. Prevost stated that Edenshaw 'was decidedly the most advanced Indian I have met on the Coast: quick, cunning, ambitious, crafty, and, above all, anxious to obtain the good opinion of the white men.'

Similarly HMS Trincomalee's investigation into the affair concluded that there was insufficient evidence to indict Chief Edenshaw. Captain Wallace Houston considered Edenshaw 'a man of great influence in the neighbourhood, and one worth treating with every consideration.'



In 1884 both Chief Weah and Chief Edenshaw were amongst the first Haidas to become Christians when they were baptised by an Anglican minister, Charles Harrison. Chief Edenshaw died in 1894.

Although it will never be completely known what happened between Edenshaw and Weah that day in September 1852, the first missionary to live amongst the Masset Haida in 1876 documents that some members of the tribe informed him that it was by Edenshaw's orders that the schooner was attacked and taken.

*Chief Albert Edward Edenshaw  
dressed in naval uniform at  
about eighty years of age circa  
1890*

# THE BOY'S MANUAL OF SEAMANSHIP AND GUNNERY

## Compiled for the use of THE TRAINING SHIPS OF THE ROYAL NAVY

### *Preface*

This manual has been written for the use of boys under training for Her Majesty's Navy. My principal object has been to explain everything simply and clearly, to enable him to pass with facility from one thing to another and prevent him becoming a 'backward boy.'

I wish to add here a few words by way of advice to the boys; I would impress upon a boy's mind that he has chosen one of the most honourable professions, that of defender of his country, one in whose hands very often its honour and standing with other nations is entrusted. He is received into the Navy at an early age, at great expense to the country, to be thoroughly trained. But all the training in the world will avail to nothing if good conduct is not added to good qualifications.

It will not take him long to distinguish between the good and the bad boys; then let him avoid the latter in every possible way. Boys of good character are allowed to land from the ship twice a week for a walk or to meet friends residing in the neighbourhood. My advice therefore is to prize this privilege without infringing upon it, as any deviation from the rules often leads a boy into loose habits, and the first step down the ladder of destruction is commenced.

A mean or cowardly boy will sometimes rather risk incurring the displeasure of his superiors by wilfully breaking the regulations laid down for his guidance, than stand the scorn and derision of the bad boys, who will in every way induce him to do wrong, and laugh at him for being afraid if he refuses. But the brave, honest boy who fears nothing but the displeasure of his Commanding Officer for direct disobedience of orders, his great aim is to go forth maintaining a good character.

When on shore avoid all intoxicating drinks and the use of tobacco in every shape. Never enter a public house. Allow no inducement to cause you to turn aside from the straight and narrow path you have marked out. Be cleanly in your habits; careful of your kit; always ready to obey orders.

If you commence life in a training ship with dirty habits, inattention to your drills and a disregard to good order when on shore, you will leave with an indifferent character. If you start badly you may be sure you will end your course badly; perhaps be dismissed from the service with disgrace, or discharged from your ship on paying off as an objectionable character, being ever after shunned by your old shipmates as a man unworthy of being known, thus becoming a burden to yourself and die at an early age, unregretted and uncared for.

Staff-Commander C. Burney, R.N., F.R.G.S  
Royal Hospital Schools, Greenwich April 1871

# MEMBERS' LETTERS

When I wrote the article 'How to fire your cannon' for the last issue of 'Quarterdeck', I should have known that the advice given 'Do not try this at home' may not be totally heeded. Michael Gregory of Rye Hill, Sussex purchased a 32 pounder cannon from HMS Foudroyant in the mid 1970's and as his letter and photograph show it is in working order. However it was Tony Dickens of Stoke Bishop, Bristol who provided the answer to 'What is a crupper?' He is a trustee of the SS Great Britain and I thank him for the copies of their last two newsletters.

The membership secretary passed on to me a letter from Brian Mitchell of Crawley, West Sussex, and in response to his comments the application form for membership now specifically includes senior citizens. I also thank him for the photograph of the Foudroyant aground at Blackpool from the October 2002 Navy News.

Sandy Kinghorn of Cullercoats, North Shields provided the preface from the Boy's Manual used in this edition, and his accompanying letter provides further information.

I look forward to further members' letters.

*Editor*

## **From Michael Gregory 5th February 2009**

Delighted to read the article on 'cannon firing'. On your files my pride and joy will show – 32 pounder Dundas 1841 purchased by me from officer in charge HMS Foudroyant mid-1970's, provenance 100%!

Cannot help with 'crupper' but good old eyebolts were more numerous (Douglas idea) to take real tackle to give traverse.

But, 'lint stock' is not good' try 'linstock' – I fire with this. Defined in 1815 dictionary and Henry V at Honfleur prologue to act 3. HMS Amazon (1799) describes as the 'match'.

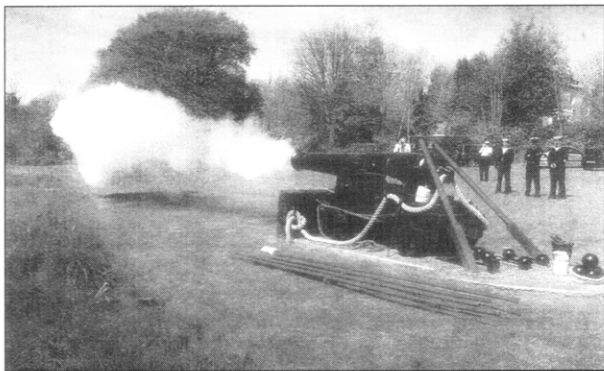
If lock fails, then linstock/ match, then (unfailing) gun captain's pistol, no ball and half charge!

When I fire (several licences!) lock has had to have springs strengthened and flints from Suffolk had to be right size and colour. Not too reliable....

If other owners have similar interest to myself in 'Great Guns' I would like to compare notes with them.

Yours truly

Michael Gregory  
Rye Hill, Sussex



*32 Pounder from  
HMS Foudroyant  
fired at Rye  
with black powder charge*

## From Tony Dickens 9th February 2009

...Re: Spring 2009, p.3, 'crupper':- this means:

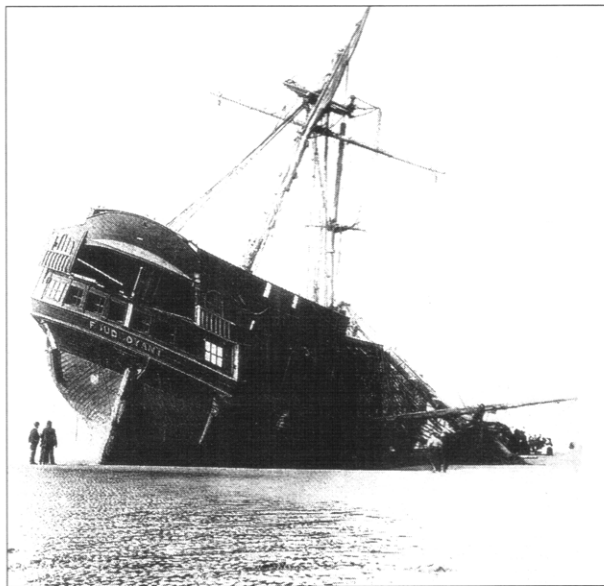
'The train tackle ring-bolt in a gun-carriage.' 'Train' in this context means: 'The hinder part of a gun -carriage.'

I enclose details of my source for these. (*'The Sailor's Word-Book' by Admiral W.H. Smyth (1788-1865), first published in 1867; recent new edition by Conway Maritime press*). Admiral Smyth is a wonderful reference book, but most enticing and time-tempting to use, I find!.....

Yours sincerely

Tony Dickens

Stoke Bishop, Bristol



*HMS Foudroyant  
aground at Blackpool  
1897*

## From Sandy Kinghorn 4th March 2009

.....I feel you and your readers may just be interested to read the enclosed from an old hardback book given to me by a friend of mine sixty years ago, he having bought it in a second-hand-bookshop for the price of sixpence. The Boys' Manual of Seamanship and Gunnery was 'Approved by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to be used in the Training Ships of the Royal Navy'. Although this fourth edition is dated April 1871 I feel sure that an original version, or something very similar, was in use during HMS Trincomalee's active service.

Incidentally the book, covers everything from Homograph signalling, rope making, seamanship, sailmaking, boat exercises, anchors, gunnery exercise (with breech loading cannon), cutlass, sword bayonet and pistol exercise – to rigging. I found this latter (rigging) very useful in my days in the heavy lift ship South Africa Star of which I was the chief officer (the mate) from 1961 to 1964. Every voyage we had to rig and unrig the 180 ton SWL derrick before and after use, which was where my little Manual of Seamanship came in very useful.....

Yours sincerely

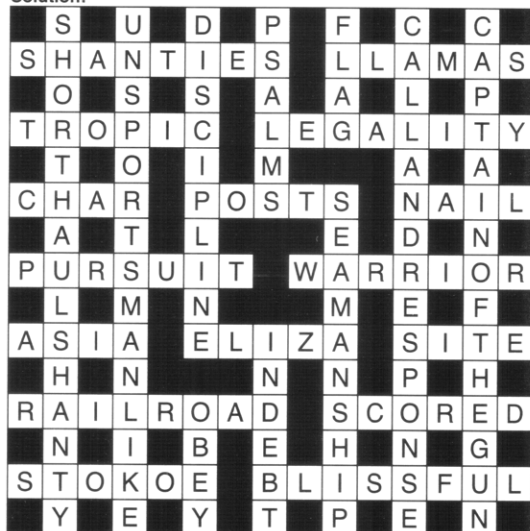
Sandy Kinghorn

Cullercoats, North Shields

## Mess Deck Crossword

Spring 2009

Solution:



# A Long Haul Shanty for HMS Trincomalee

Soprano

Built to serve in the King's Na' vy, By a

Par' si of the name Bo' man' jee, Trin' co' ma' lee, Trin' co' ma'

lee. With a sil' ver nail in her keel of teak,

Caulk'd and copp' ered she would not leak, she set

sa' il from Bom' bay. Heave a' way! Heave a'

way! Heave so we can go to sea. Heave a'

way! Heave a' way, on the Trin' co' ma' lee!

## **Royal Visit to the Ship**

The Trust's Patron, HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, made an hour long visit to the Ship on Friday 6 March and officially opened 'The Worlds of Trincomalee' Exhibition.

It was a great morning for everyone involved and made all the better by fine sunny weather throughout the visit. The Ship looked a treat! The Duke of Edinburgh was welcomed by a Civic delegation and then Captain David Smith, the Trust's President, took our Royal visitor for a tour of the Ship. On the quayside the youngsters and Officers of the TS Trincomalee Sea Cadets formed a welcoming line before The Duke of Edinburgh was piped on board with the usual ceremony.

We were keen to enable The Duke of Edinburgh to see the recent improvements in the Ship resulting from some quite extensive capital works. These works included the replacement of the lower rigging using polypropylene cordage and a significant extension to the interpretation on board.

During the tour of the Ship, The Duke of Edinburgh met Trustees and staff, together with Ian Purdy, Chairman of the Friends, and watched a demonstration of rigging activity, in addition to signing the Visitor Book! Following this, Captain Smith accompanied our Patron round the quayside and into the new Trincomalee Exhibition where he was shown round by Jean Hughes from the Trust before unveiling the plaque to officially open the Exhibition. Whilst in the exhibition gallery representatives of the main funding organisations – the Northern Rock Foundation and the Heritage Lottery Fund, were presented together with the design company – Continuum. The Duke of Edinburgh also met representatives of the partners that the Trust is working with on the Trincomalee Wharf site.

This was the third visit made by The Duke of Edinburgh in his capacity as Patron – the last being made in 2000, and he spoke highly of the Trust's recent achievements when opening the Exhibition. The visit prompted good media coverage in the region which capped a most successful morning for all concerned.

## **Early season optimism .....**

The early season has been pretty successful for us with April's results being well ahead of last year's visitor numbers and even beating this year's targets! Similarly, early May has been buoyant – if you will excuse the expression – with good visitor figures and an encouraging number of advanced bookings for groups, educational visits, functions and weddings.

We remain guardedly optimistic that the season will hold up despite the continuing difficult economic picture, and this of course is a time when the support of the Friends and everyone associated with the Ship can make a real difference. By way of example, thank you to everyone who has already sent in a donation to the Trust's



Appeal resulting from the brochure enclosed with the last Quarterdeck – it is very much appreciated. Please consider a Gift Aid donation – just a few pounds from many of our supporters would make a huge impact!

Another way of helping, of course, is through advocacy and encouraging others to visit the Ship – and become Friends themselves!

The Shop has also started the season well and particularly resulting from sales of the new DVD – HMS Trincomalee – The Great Survivor. We have had a really good response from Friends to date and I hope there are more sales in the pipeline! That section of the Trust's website has been updated and there are now a range of items displayed for purchase.

## Crest Boards

These crest boards were in the ship when she returned to Hartlepool in 1987 and have managed to survive throughout the restoration. They are now situated on the tiller flat and no one knew much about them. Until recently.



Brian Horton, who was the ship's historian for a number of years whilst she was in Portsmouth came up with the answer.

The boards came from the Royal Yacht Victoria and Albert II when she was broken up and were acquired by Geoffrey Wheatley Cobb in 1904. On one board is the motto "Dieu et mon droit" (God and my right) and "Treu und fest" (True and fast).

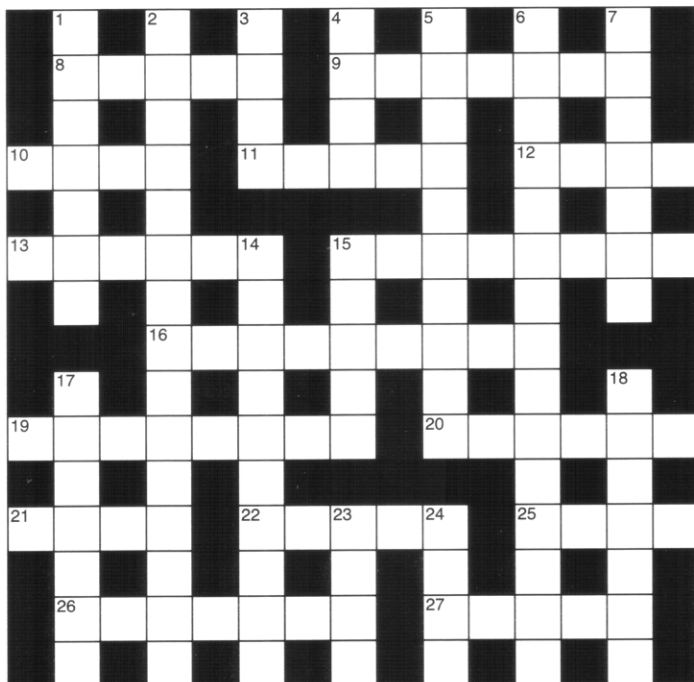
Jean Hughes has in the records a copy of the Foudroyant report in 1956 where they are shown on the sides of the bow but Brian Horton said that they were on the bulkhead of the Captain's quarters.

Have any of you who were in Foudroyant any reminiscences about these crest boards, as it is hoped, eventually, that money becomes available through fundraising to have these crest boards renovated.

**Bryn Hughes**

*General Manager, HMS Trincomalee Trust*

# Mess Deck Crossword



HDT

## ACROSS

- 8 South American country
- 9 To whip severely
- 10 Trincomalee's class of frigate
- 11 Pondered
- 12 Side-arm worn by midshipmen
- 13 Inlaid stone decoration
- 15 As dead as a .....
- 16 They include the English and French
- 19 Flower sellers
- 20 Captain Houston met Queen Pomare here
- 21 HMS Trincomalee belonged to this
- 22 To suffer
- 25 Paddles
- 26 Fables
- 27 Position of the Captain's cabin

## DOWN

- 1 A stepwise arrangement of ships
- 2 Bad naval trainees may do this (3,2,2,5,3)
- 3 22 feet on the Susan Sturges
- 4 Employs
- 5 Trincomalee's alter ego?
- 6 Susan Sturges was this type of vessel (7,8)
- 7 What the press gang did
- 14 Chiefs Edenshaw and Weah became these
- 15 Deceives
- 17 The naval trainee should be this in his habits
- 18 Hoarding
- 23 A subject of inquiry
- 24 Perforated nozzle

*Solution next issue*

# APPLICATION FORM

## to join

## THE FRIENDS OF HMS TRINCOMALEE

Membership categories and annual subscriptions:

Adult	£20.00
Concessionary *	£15.00
Joint Adult	£30.00
Joint Concessionary *	£22.50
Family Group +	£45.00

\* Children, students, senior citizens and those unwaged

+ Two adults and up to three children in a family

*Please complete, detach and return this form to:*

The Friends of HMS Trincomalee  
PO Box 1817, Hartlepool, TS24 7YE

**MEMBERSHIP CARDS ARE NOT TRANSFERABLE**

### **YOUR DETAILS:**

Title ..... Surname .....

First Names .....

Address .....

.....

..... Post Code .....

Tel. ....

Membership Category .....

*Cheques made payable to 'HMS Trincomalee Trust'*

AMOUNT .....

☐

GIFT AID DECLARATION. As a UK taxpayer I would like the HMS Trincomalee Trust to claim back the tax on this and all future donations.

*Please tick the box.*

SIGNATURE .....

# THE FRIENDS OF HMS TRINCOMALEE

## *Summer and Autumn events 2009*

- 13 June Summer Fair on board HMS Trincomalee  
1pm to 4 pm*
- 23 September Marketing the Tall Ships Races 2010  
A talk by Jo Cole, Tourism Officer, Hartlepool  
Borough Council*
- 21 October Trafalgar  
A talk by Commodore Paul Sutermeister,  
Vice Chairman, HMS Trincomalee Trust*
- 25 November Speaker to be arranged*
- 21 December Carols in the Cabin  
A festive sing along for everyone*

*Unless otherwise stated all events take place in the  
Captain's Quarters on board HMS Trincomalee  
and begin at 7.00pm*

These events are free for Friends, with guests charged £1 each.

Friends receive free entry to HMS Trincomalee and Hartlepool's Maritime Experience for one year, can attend talks and presentations on board, receive the Quarterdeck magazine which is published three times a year and receive a 10% discount on items from the Ship Shop. An application form is overleaf.