

Steam Pinnacle – Newsletter – June 2023

Update - Get us to the Festival on time!

The ups and downs of getting 199 ready in time for the Gosport Marine Festival 2023. Those familiar with old steam vessels will

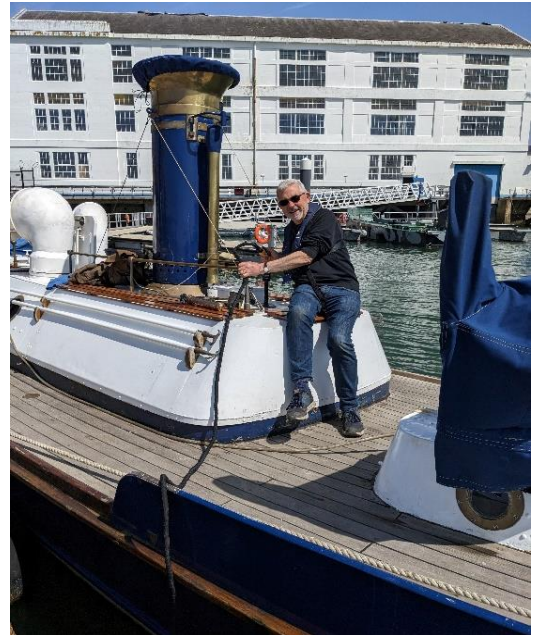
be aware of what is involved. It may be a revelation for others!

Early May - The pinnacle cox'n Brian Mansbridge reports that thanks to the considerable effort of all the team, 199 has been in steam again. Under the expert and ebullient direction of Mike Williams (a professional steam specialist engineer) the boiler has been through a major overhaul, re-levelled and properly internally insulated. It was flashed-up, nurtured through a couple of heat soak cycles with safety checks (that it passed without any fuss) and finally late in the day a low head of steam raised. On the following day after a further tightening of the access port bolts and raising a full head of steam for alongside engine and pumps proving, there is a plan to sail for underway trials and hopefully berthing at Hornet.

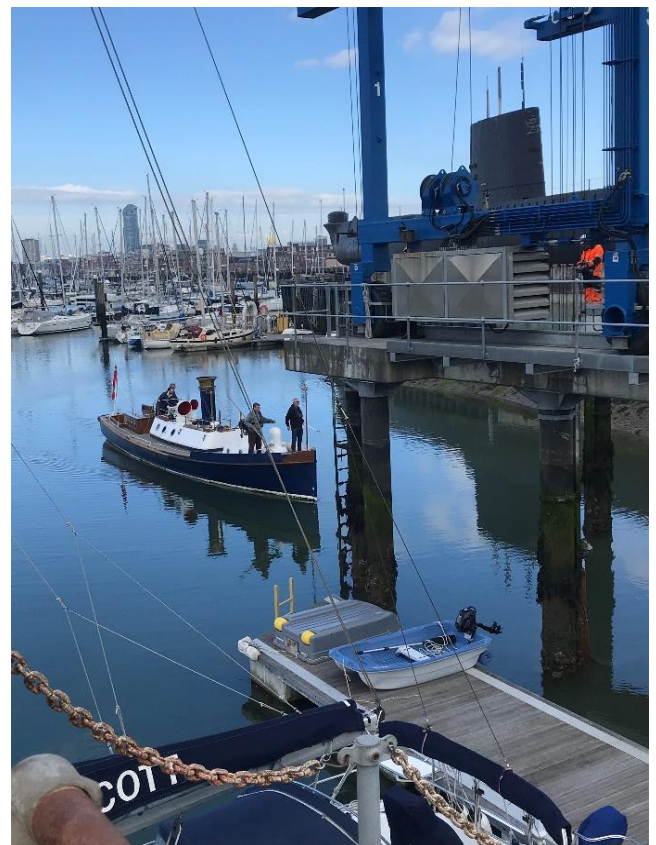
While there has been a lot of time devoted by many over the last two weeks, we should all be grateful to John, our most senior engineer in age and salty tales; he has been there supporting Mike Williams from before opening hours till most of us have gone. This time the welcome home was "at least you don't smell so much of diesel tonight." My response that's because we have been to sea burning diesel instead, with the wind in our faces and with a bit less time down the oily compartments.



Right – under steam to Gosport .
Photo by Paul Woodman



Paul Woodman filling the boiler ready to steam - by Paul Slattery



Approaching Hornet- Photo by Jennie Gerrard

199 is now ashore behind the mast shed in Hornet on stands and that's where she will stay for haul out works. Steam raised this a.m. in just 2 hours... but



The garden like state of the shaft after lifting out by Brian M



In the boat lift at Hornet by Brian M

effectively. Should all be easy to fix..... according to Mike. Hence we did not cross the harbour until about 1600. After a tour of the marina (which I thoroughly enjoyed – not sure about the plastic boat owners though....who popped up from a lot of hatches at the sound of a steam whistle only to recognise many tons of wood and steam manoeuvring nearby – but not even close as 199 responded perfectly. I nudged her bow gently into the soft mud under the boat lift as it was dead low water. Expertly lifted, power washed off and eased on blocks and hull supports behind the mast shed..

the basin trial revealed the air pump still has a problem pulling a vacuum on the condenser. A variety of reasons but Mike Williams was all over the problem we could hardly pass him spanners quick enough. The diagnosis revealed the vacuum pump is not brilliant but the condenser is almost certainly not working very



On the chocks at Hornet, stern gear "garden" removed!

Thanks to the crew and Alistair for arranging and re-arranging our reception in Hornet as problems delayed our ETA. A long day but our objectives met and all in good company. The regular team have spent a lot of hours this last two weeks so I think deserve the Coronation Weekend off.

I know it's not 'free' to be on chocks at Hornet so we need to start again next week (post Coronation). The antifouling still

looks pretty good but needs another coat and there is work around the boot topping and hull touch ups. The anodes have almost gone and it would be good to get the end off the condenser for a look inside, hopefully we can even diagnose and fix without Mike Williams. He said the hot and cold flow 'sides' were part divided with wood where the casting is defective, probably just needs replacing and a general clean out. Today I got there early to complete the rubbing down and 'Sikafix' the hull leaks (I know a swimming pool installer who uses this underwater to fix leaks. I am not sure it's that good on oily drips but after blasting dry with compressed air and rapid application it seemed to achieve a good measure of improvement, Paul Woodman remarked it was better than at the last haul out). The painting team worked a long day in the hot sun to complete the antifoul, just the rudder to do.

Meanwhile Tom and John worked on the condenser, removing and blanking the lower pipes ready for a Fernox descale, there was no problem with the dividing web casting, nor wood missing. With some tube de-scaling, flush and reassembly the condenser could be ready for Friday; otherwise we are committed to a cold move to Haslar Marina (tentatively explored with the Haslar Marine Festival Manager but only possible if calm). Thanks to Alistair who has obtained the new anodes and will creep around after dark to laser mark out boot topping guidelines for us to follow. He has also confirmed with the Hornet boat lift team for a return to the water at 1400 on Friday.

Ideally the programme for the final week (15-20 May) is:

- Monday – Fernox treat the condenser and anti-foul paint the rudder, Hammarite paint a few rust fittings/drain marks on the hull.
- Tuesday - a full working team to paint the blue hull sides. engineers to drain and flush the condenser or on Wednesday (with an outflow extension pipe to clear the new hull paint)
- Wednesday - a full working team to paint the white boot topping and perhaps some varnish work. Progress condenser
- Thursday –varnish work and perhaps other touch up other areas as essential , white upperworks, funnel chipped blue etc.
- Friday – Complete condenser works and clean up, refloating preps, and prepare anchor, mooring lines, fenders etc. Lift down at 1400
- Saturday – Smile, you are on show..... and perhaps steam back to Boat House 4 (BH4 moorings).

I recognise that's all very ambitious, but the weather forecast should allow that sort of progress, so it's worth a try. It will mean a lot more volunteer time than normal and nobody should be onboard on their own. Use Ivan's Sunday call for volunteers and our crew contact list to fine tune your time onsite with others on the list, even just two volunteers for a few hours, it could make all the difference.

Monday 15th - Good progress today. Paul W and I completed an overcoat/filling-in any areas of the anti-foul coverage and thanks to Alistair who anti-foul painted the rudder. Alistair is also replacing the anodes. We finished the preparation on the blue hull side and painted the blue today, including blue touch up where the funnel was chipped during removal. This just leaves the forward washboard to paint blue, if required. 199 is looking a lot better already, from the gunnel down, but still plenty to do....

Tuesday 16th Tom and progressed the condenser improvement with Fernox DS3 to carry out the condenser descale. Tim is continuing the preparation for varnishing; Paul W and I have applied a first coat of boot topping after Alistair expertly gave us the masking tape limits with his laser level overnight. The machinery canopy upstand has been prepared with all the rust ground-off and a base coat of Hammarite applied. The hull work is progressing better than I could have expected thanks to the support of volunteer's and the

cooperative weather. The condenser work continues but Tom is on his own this week with both Roger and John away. The condensate side of the condenser has been chemically descaled today and most parts are ready to replace, it just a time and space problem and getting the right gasket material, bolts and studs etc. The condenser reassembly is the critical component in getting back into steam and I am exploring all options....

Wednesday 17th There is strong workforce and the anti-foul and blue was hard enough by then to paint the white boot topping, Alistair worked his overnight magic with the laser levels to give us the guidelines. Including re-painting the draft marks. There were enough hands to also accomplish the preps and painting of the canopy upstand and canopy white where required.. The Princess Royal came to visit Hornet this afternoon it meant we were 'locked in' and working very hard in case she came by to tell us what a "good job" we were doing. Unfortunately, we did not get a Royal visit, even though I had suggested to Hornet's General Manager to offer HRH an opportunity to see one of the other patronages (well the NMRN) sitting proudly on stands dressed overall. Nonetheless, the team did a great job and 199 looked fine. Tim continued resolutely rubbing down the deck gunnels, the rusty canopy upstand has been properly de-rusted, Hammarite painted and now back to blue, and work on the white upperworks is well underway.

Sadly, the improvements to the condenser are not progressing at the same pace, there is more descaling to achieve and then a lot of reassembly. After checking with Ivan, I contacted Mike Williams our steam specialist, but he is not available to help until next week, so I am hoping I can arrange a cold move around to Haslar Marina with their workboat. Understandably disappointing, but hopefully with a day on the condenser next week we can raise steam to return to Boat House 4. Today Alistair fitted the last of the anodes so there is nothing to delay our return to the water.



Paintwork ready for the Marine Festival – looking

Thursday 18th Yet another great day with the final painting jobs completed by two of the four volunteers. After a tenacious effort, Tim has finally removed all the varnish from the deck edge and gunnel, while not yet re-

varnished it looks much better than in the prior worn and water blackened patchwork. I completed some underwater jobs and anti-foul finishing so 199 is ready for the water again. Tomorrow there are a few minor tasks to complete, wash and polish and laying out the deck gear to be off the blocks to be lowered back afloat at 1400. I have confirmed the short trip to Haslar Marina will be thanks to Haslar Marina's work boat and the Marina will kindly allow us to remain on the jetty until Mike Williams and the engineering team can finish the condenser descaling, reassemble and raise steam..

Thanks again for all the many hours of hard work from all those that that helped achieved "a transformation" as commented by one of the Hornet staff today. By a quick calculation and including the 'exceptional' work party last Saturday over 100 man-hours have been volunteered so far this week. Neither does that include the night hours Alistair was applying two complete hull turns of masking tape with a Lazer level in the dark, as well as cleaning the shaft and painting the rudder.

Fri 19th Today after a few final jobs and some hasty tidying up 199 was lowered back to the water in the early afternoon and then taken round to Haslar Marina to be an exhibit in Gosport Marine Festival, link here: <https://www.gosportmarinefestival.uk/>. Thanks to Haslar Marina's workboat team who cold moved her. She looked very smart thanks to all the hard work of the many who worked on her during haul out and while we cannot turn the engine, we can raise steam tomorrow for a merry toot or two. We still have the condenser to fix, while originally that was hoped to be on Monday, Mike Williams is not now available until Wednesday.

Saturday 20th – the Gosport Marine Festival - There was still a bit of engineering going on to get the condenser cleaned and reassembled ready for our return to BH4 pontoons on Wednesday; hence I am in engineering overalls, while both Pauls and Tim were properly dressed in period rig. We counted 137 onboard visitors, with probably a few that we did not manage to count and many more that viewed from



the walkway. I put my jacket over my overall to meet an old Shipmate Admiral Sir Johnathon Band GCB DL (probably better if I had remained in my overall - photo left).

Among the visitors was the Worshipful the Mayor of Gosport, Councillor Martin Pepper (photo below). The weather was good as shown by the photos, and the atmosphere upbeat, we added to the music with a few toots from the whistle; proving we can get a working head of steam in two hours.



Tuesday 23rd - John and I 'buttoned up' most of the pipes on the condenser today after the extra Fernox treatment, just one pipe left for Mike Williams tomorrow prior to flashing up and proving. If it all goes to plan could be underway by 1200. If we can depart at midday I will ask Mike W to do some engineering training drills (within the harbour) prior to the provisional 1500 ETA I have given to Steve Marshall for return to BH4 moorings. He is keen to see us back, especially with the open pontoon event on Saturday. I have also advised Colin McLean of Haslar Marina of an intended ETD of 1200 tomorrow together with thanks for accommodating 199 over the extra days for condenser improvements.

Wednesday 24th - The work on the condenser was inspected with a borescope this morning and the final connections closed. The inspection identified that not all the scale had been removed from the lower part of the condenser but it is no longer blocked with scale, a further Fernox treatment, ideally to both sides of the condenser for 24hours prior to the next steaming is recommended. We should also add the boiler water conditioner. There is enough Fernox for a further treatment and we may have the boiler water additive in the lay-apart store. Steam was raised by midday and all functions checked and balanced with gentle trial running on the Haslar Marina moorings, the condenser flow is significantly improved but it is still not efficient enough to pull a vacuum; hence the requirement for a further descale.

The aim of the day, with the assistance of Mike Williams, after the inspection and advice on the condenser, was to hone the experience of the engineering team on both the boiler control and the throttles. At 1230 we left the mooring initially practicing alongsides on the more spacious jetties of Haslar Marina prior to longer runs up and down the west side of Portsmouth Harbour. The engineers exchanged duties, all the deck crew took a turn at the wheel and we all practiced engine orders, watched vessel turns at various speeds and experienced the paddle wheel effect (some call prop-walk) that comes with our large propellor.

We returned to BH4 jetties at 1445. We finished the day with lifting the safety valves to check for the correct release pressure. It would churlish not to admit I scraped past Warrior jetty making a sternboard into the BH4 moorings, there is some gunnel rubbing strip to repair but fortunately no damage to the new paintwork. My apologies to all, I misjudged the tide when making a long sternboard approach to the moorings, lesson learned, try not to be too clever crossing the tricky tidal stream.

Thanks to all the crew that made today successful trials and training possible and Mike Williams for his advice and guidance. 199 is now in position and looking smart for Saturday 27th, BH4 Open Pontoon Days (Photo left – the Pontoon Open Day with visitors aboard – photo Paul Woodman)



Tim, Paul and Paul at the Festival



By editor – as I have stood down this year after 15 years with the regular volunteer maintenance team I think I can comment impartially on the enormous amount of hard work that the 199 crew member have put into meeting their commitment to attend the Gosport Marine Festival this year. Super job lads! Most visitors to 199 probably have little appreciation of how much goes on inside and outside the hull. Those who have read this article, based on Brian Mansbridge's daily reports and planning, will have had their eyes opened a little I hope.

The Big Steam Adventure Peter Davison, John Sergeant and Paul Middleton travel together from Greenwich to Scotland using only the power of steam. All four episodes available until the end of the year.

<https://www.channel5.com/show/the-big-steam-adventure>



National Historic Ships Photo Competition

The competition runs from 1st May to midnight on 31st August 2023. To enter a photograph in their competition, complete an online entry form and upload your images as directed. There are three dropdown categories to choose from:

- *In All Weathers* - for our overall competition
- *Classic Boat* - for the Classic Boat Award
- *Newcomer of the Year* - only open to photographers who have not entered the competition - n before

Details and rules - <https://www.nationalhistoricships.org.uk/photocomp>

Upcoming Steam Events

The Steamboat Association of Great Britain:

Fal Steamboat Rally 16-19th June Mylor Yacht Harbour.

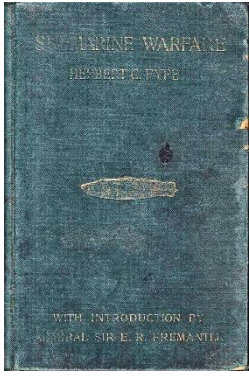
The event will coincide with the Falmouth Classics and Sea Shanty Festival .

www.falmouthclassics.org.uk

<https://www.falmouthseashanty.co.uk/>

Evesham River Festival - 8 July Sankey Marina

<https://theeveshamriverfestival.uk/>

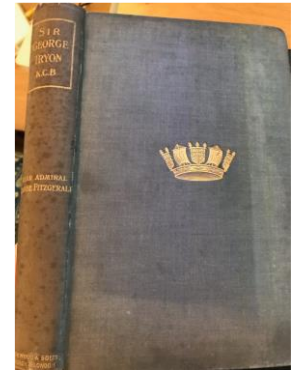


Submarine Warfare, Past and Present Herbert C Fyfe .reprint Street Press 2022 344 pages
ISBN-10 : 1017448124 ISBN-13 : 978-1017448122.

Original version from Grant Richards 1902 can be read online at:
<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/62908/62908-h/62908-h.htm> copyright free

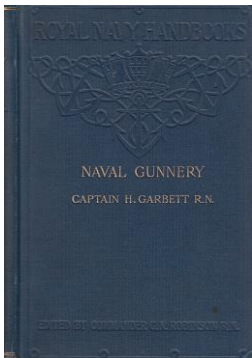
SIR GEORGE TRYON KCB Rear-Admiral C. C. Penrose

Fitzgerald; William Blackwood and Sons 1898; reprinted Palala Press 2016; 472 pages●
ISBN-10 : 1355850991 ISBN-13 : 978-1355850991. Tryon (1832-1893) commanded the first British ironclad, and later rose to command the Mediterranean Station. In 1893 he went down with his ship (HMS Victoria) after a collision at sea during naval manoeuvres. Various theories have been put forward to account for the hoisting of the signal which caused the disaster but there can be no doubt that the signal was the primary cause of the accident : and we know that, with that honesty and generosity which characterised his whole life, Sir George Tryon with his last words took upon himself the sole responsibility. It was no more than those who knew him best would have expected from him.



Naval Gunnery; a Description & History of the Fighting Equipment

of a Man-of-war Captain H Garbett, George Bell and Sons, 1897– reprint Legare Street Press 404 pages; ISBN-10 : 1018565833 ISBN-13 : 978-1018565835. Contents: I. Naval gunnery up to the period of the Russian War II. The first introduction of rifled guns — the Armstrong breech-loading and other systems III. The adoption of muzzle-loading rifled guns, .,IV. General remarks on breech-loading rifled guns, VI. The different natures of breech-loading guns in the Navy VII. Naval gun-mountings of the present day VIII. Quick-firing guns IX. Quick-firing guns etc



Deeds of Naval Daring Admiral Edward Giffard; John Murray 1910. Reprint Franklin Classics Trade Press 2018; 428 pages; ISBN-10 : 0344859541 ISBN-13 : 978-0344859540. A humorous and intriguing collection of anecdotes from the British Navy.

Pushing Water by R.N.V. Eric P. Dawson; John Lane, The Bodley Head 1919; An unusual account of the activities of the Royal Navy's Auxiliary Motor Boat Patrol Service during the First World War. “The book is a collection of letters written on board ship, in the discomforts of that very cramped existence—and a cheerful, interesting, illuminating book it is. We know little of the life of this part of the navy . . . and this young officer’s pictures of it are absorbing and informative reading indeed.” (from a contemporary review)

The Navy Everywhere Conrad Cato (Pseudonym of Cyril Cox); Constable and Company Ltd 1919; The book covers: The Navy In East Africa; The Navy In The Cameroons; The Navy In Serbia; The First Kite-Balloon Ship; The Navy In The Persian Gulf; The Navy In Roumania; The Aden Patrol; The Red Sea Patrol

The Last Cruise of HMS Majestic George Goodchild; Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent & Co. Ltd; 1917. The ship’s war-time history from Bombarding the Belgian Coast in 1914 to her participation in the Dardanelles Campaign where, on 27 May 1915, she was torpedoed and sunk by U-21. From the logbook of Ex-Petty Officer J. G. Cowie, H.M.S. Majestic