

YACHT WERE YOU THINKING? An A-Z of Boat Names Good and Bad – Jonathan Eyers. Published in hard covers by Adlard Coles Nautical / Bloomsbury Publishing [www.adlardcoles.com] at £9.99. 160 120mm x 180mm pages, with a few mono drawings. ISBN 978-1-4729-4437-5. Also available for Kindle

I must admit that my heart sank when I saw the title of this book and took note of the author's previous publications. Humour is very much a matter of personal taste and few jokes take long to progress from grin to groan.

The introduction reassured me – Jonathan Eyers clearly believes that naming a boat, any boat, requires serious consideration. The perennial popularity of books listing names and their meanings for application to babies shows that many people feel the need for information and support when it comes to this important choice. The changing fashion in names is faithfully reflected in classroom registers a few years later, and it is apparently true that there are similar league tables in boat names! Whether striving for originality or preferring the comfort of fellowship, the important things to remember are to keep it short – and, as with a child, that a boat may be part of the family for many years to come.

This is a book to dip into according to mood, and the various sections have introductions giving fair warning of content. It is evident that a good deal of research has gone into the tradition of boat names before the explosion in boat ownership gave the topic general relevance.

This nicely-produced volume has been issued in time for Christmas, and doubtless many copies will be bought as presents. Whether or not looking to name a new purchase, there is much to interest anyone who has ever had occasion to wonder how and why that particular moniker came to be chosen for someone's pride and joy.

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