



THE VOYAGES OF PIRATE: 50,000 Ocean Miles on a Classic Swan – Juan E Corradi. Published in hard covers by Seapoint Books [www.seapointbooks.com] at \$14.13 / £16.79. 187 186mm x 263mm pages with many colour photographs. ISBN 978-1-7325-4702-5

All Swans are handsome yachts but *Pirate*, with her black topsides, is especially so. According to a northern legend, swans are silent birds which only sing on approaching death. But if a swan dies and resurrects, then it returns to the water as a black swan and lives forever. There were just 116 Swan 38s built, of which *Pirate*, built in 1974, was number 19. Juan Corradi bought her 15 years later.

The book opens with *Pirate*'s five Bermuda Races, including a fascinating account of how she won in 1990 when her navigator plotted a cunning course far west of the rest of the fleet. This took advantage of two cold eddies and, sure enough, won them the race – but not without causing much nervousness amongst the crew. *Pirate* also won the trophy for best placed yacht over 15 years old. The book continues with the history of the Nautor factory in Finland and their hugely successful and very sought-after Swans designed by Sparkman and Stephens. The iconic flush decks and streamlined coach roofs became a hallmark of all Swans: 'image matches performance'.

Following purchase in 1989 and a complete refit at the Jamestown Boatyard in Rhode Island, *Pirate* was ready to sail away. After victory in the 1990 Bermuda Race Juan and three crew crossed to the Azores, continuing into the Mediterranean to winter *Pirate* in Greece. Two years later she returned to the Atlantic to take part in the America 500 event commemorating Columbus's voyage to the New World in 1492. It was an exciting ocean crossing, with stops in Porto Santo, Madeira and the Canary Islands. Juan's writing is interspersed with 'recollections' from previous owners, crew members and Juan's wife Christina, printed against blue backgrounds. All interesting anecdotes, mostly enthusing about the time spent sailing on *Pirate*.

Returning to the Med, *Pirate* was based in Italy for several years while Juan and his wife were working in Florence, but in June 2000 they left for all points west and were in the Canaries by November. Family illness and a broken gearbox caused a delay, so it was 2001 by the time *Pirate* made her 19-day crossing to Grenada. They sailed the boat hard and Juan gives minute details of life on board – sea conditions, sails used and the meals they enjoyed. This could get rather tedious but for the fact that he writes entertainingly and the reader is caught up in the events. *Pirate* stayed in the Lesser Antilles for a year before making the passage home to Rhode Island in 2002.

In 2004 *Pirate* crossed the Atlantic again, completing her fifth Bermuda race *en route*. She spent two years in Scotland, with a new engine installed in Oban, before

heading for Bergen, Norway via the Orkneys and Shetlands. Her stay in the Baltic over the next five years included cruising in Sweden, Finland and Denmark. By 2010 Juan and Christina had made the difficult decision to sell *Pirate* after 21 years of travel and adventure, happy in the knowledge that she was returning to her birthplace in Finland with a Nordic new owner. As a fascinating sequel to these years, Juan and Christina decided to have a 1:20 scale model of *Pirate* built. The project took five years and the result is stunning – the photos in the book could be of a real yacht, until you look very carefully. Every detail is correct, even down below.

I enjoyed this lavishly produced hard-cover book, with its detailed descriptions of ocean crossings and harbours that will be familiar to many members. But its appeal would be greatest to any Swan owner – the ultimate homage to a truly classic yacht.

EHHMH

See also *After Many a Summer Sails the Swan* by Juan E Corradi & Christina Spellman in *Flying Fish* 2001/1.



WEST AEGEAN – Rod and Lucinda Heikell, 4th edition. Published in soft covers by Imray Laurie Norie & Wilson [www.imray.com] at £22.50. 308 190mm x 245mm pages in full colour throughout. ISBN 978-1-7867-9087-3

This new edition of the Heikells' *West Aegean* guide covers the coasts of the eastern Greek mainland south from the Western Sporades and the Aegean coast of the Peloponnese to Cape Malea, together with their offlying islands. It also includes the Western Cyclades islands and the Saronic and Argolic Gulfs.

The introduction gives an excellent overview and sound advice. It covers a wide range of useful and interesting information on the area in respect of its history, food, travelling, formalities and weather. This fourth edition has been expanded to include suggestions on things to do ashore, be it ancient sites or wine tours, as well as the latest situation on sailing taxes and the forecast implications of Brexit. Pilotage notes, plans and photographs have been updated following the couple's recent cruise of the area.

Rod Heikell has spent nearly forty years cruising the coasts and islands of the Mediterranean and is the acknowledged expert on sailing in Greece. His pilots have become the gold standard. Lucinda, his wife and co-author, has in particular contributed photographically to their current guides, including *West Aegean*. In our opinion the photos have become more informative over the past decade, often achieved by taking views from nearby high ground as well as including some (credited) professional drone shots. Together these help to enhance the reader's perspective and to better complement the text.

Like its companions *East Aegean* and *Ionian*, *West Aegean* contains detailed information on harbours and anchorages that cannot physically be included in the Heikells' already weighty *Greek Waters Pilot*. (The latter does, however, include the north of Greece, Crete and isolated islands not covered in the companion guides.)

Imray advise that the three regional guides are particularly suitable for charterers and flotilla sailors on holiday in the relevant areas. As long-term cruisers, however, we admit that we nearly always use the companion guides in preference to the *Greek*

Waters Pilot since they cover each area more comprehensively. Perhaps not the cheapest solution, but in our view well worth forgoing the cost of a meal or two ashore.

M&HN



THE BOUNDLESS SEA: A Human History of the Oceans – David Abulafia. Published in hard covers (with a soft cover edition promised for October) by Allen Lane/Penguin at £22.99. 1088 230mm x 150mm pages with 72 colour illustrations and many black-and-white maps. ISBN 978-1-8461-4508-7

This 1000-page history of oceanic exploration was ideal reading matter at a time of enforced isolation!

Professor David Abulafia begins with a brief account of the ancient exploration of the Pacific – ‘The Oldest Ocean’. The Polynesian oral tradition relied on positioning boats in relation to the stars, observing wave refraction due to nearby islands and watching the flight of birds. One navigator even explained that he kept the boat still and waited for the island to arrive! (Echoes of relativity here – Einstein would ask fellow passengers from Paddington when Oxford would arrive at his train). With these mental maps, Polynesians voyaged east to the Marquesas, north to Hawaii and south to Aotearoa (New Zealand). There is no evidence that Polynesians reached the Americas however, or of Thor Heyerdahl’s assertion that native Americans reached Polynesia.

The Indian Ocean – ‘The Middle Ocean’ – occupies the rest of the first 300 pages. Egyptian pharaohs and Persian kings dug canals to link the Nile with the Red Sea, but it was easier for north-bound ships to stop at Berenike or Hormos and use a short land bridge to the great river. Navigators, often referred to as ‘Roman’ but more often Greeks and Hellenised Egyptians, learned to use the monsoons to trade from the Red Sea across to India/Ceylon, where they would meet ships from Malaya. They also ranged north up the Persian Gulf and as far south as Zanzibar. Red Sea ports supplied Alexandria with Indian cotton and the very valuable black pepper (black gold) which was sold at huge profit in the Roman world. Chinese silk was sourced in India and African elephants in East Africa. The Indians were grateful for olive oil and even wine – which was salted for the long passage! – and Roman coins are still found in southwest India. In fact Ptolemy and Strabo were well aware of Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and had some knowledge of the Bay of Bengal, while a few navigators had made it to Pondicherry.

The much later Ming dynasty voyages of Zheng He, southwest from China towards Africa and up into the Arabian Gulf in the early 15th century, were ambitious but ended abruptly with a new emperor and the need to defend northern China from Mongol invasion. One can only speculate as to how history might have been different if Chinese sailors had colonised Australia or rounded Africa to reach the Atlantic and the Americas nearly a century before Columbus.*

The Atlantic – ‘The Young Ocean’ – section starts with a *periplous* compiled by an unknown Greek of the 6th century BC containing pilotage information from Galicia

* One school of opinion claims that Chinese ships did indeed visit the Atlantic in the 15th century, but others disagree.

to Massalia (Marseille), but also referring to islands further north, including one named Albioni! Mention is made of Hamilco, an earlier Carthaginian explorer and his description of what sounds very much like the Sargasso Sea. Around 320 BC Pytheas of Massalia wrote *On the Ocean*, describing his journey on local boats from Bordeaux to Britain and back, mentioning islands even further north – the Orkneys and Shetlands and possibly the Faroes. This gave rise to much discussion about Ultima Thule, though his description of big tides and fog were barely believed. There is extensive information about the Anglo Saxons and the Vikings, who were surprised to find Irish monks already in Iceland in the 9th century. Then there are the Hansa merchants from the Baltic, the Cinque Ports in southeast England, and the rise of Bristol merchants and their voyages north to Iceland and south to Madeira – and indeed west to Newfoundland, Labrador and Greenland, although the Vikings had preceded them.

The Florentines desired English wool and from 1252 would pay in gold coinage. They hired Genoese ships whose captains had learned how to pass through the Strait of Gibraltar and sail north to Flanders. Soon Venetian galleys and Catalan ships were loading wool in the Port of London. By 1300 tiny Southampton was also being used by Italian ships.

The emergence of Portugal from its beginnings around Porto owes much to the arrival in 1148 of a British/Flemish fleet of at least 164 ships from Dartmouth heading for the Second Crusade. The Bishop of Porto persuaded them to successfully attack (and unfortunately then sack) Almohad Lisbon on the way. Having colonised Madeira and the Azores, Portugal turned its attention to the Canaries and the Cape Verde islands, until the former were ceded to Castilian Spain in 1479. Portuguese fleets financed by Prince Henry the Navigator continued to explore south along the African coast in search of gold and slaves, using the Cape Verde islands and São Tomé as offshore bases. But the desire to reach the spice islands led them on, and Bartholomew Dias rounded the Cape of Good Hope in 1488 to demonstrate that the Indian Ocean was not an enclosed sea as had been claimed by Ptolemy (who obviously shared Herodotus's doubt about the Phoenician claim to have circumnavigated Africa clockwise).

The second half of the book links the seas together, starting with Columbus, Cabot, Magellan and Vasco da Gama, whose statue overlooking Sines harbour I've admired these last two summers. Abulafia describes in detail how, following the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494, Portugal and Spain competed for control of the spice trade by sending fleets in opposite directions (although Cabral did claim Brazil for the Portuguese in 1500). There's an interesting and continued discussion of various geographers' attempts to understand the position of the New World in relation to the always vague 'Indies'. After Magellan/Elcano discovered the Tierra del Fuego route west across the vast Pacific, the Spanish finally accepted that they would have to build boats on the Pacific coast of central America to reach the Philippines. The returning Manila galleons continued until 1815!

Frankly I can't recommend this encyclopaedic tome highly enough. The index alone runs to 65 pages and as a work of reference it will last any interested sailor a lifetime. Professor Abulafia also wrote *The Great Sea* (published in 2011 also by Allen Lane/Penguin, ISBN 978-0-7139-9934-1), a sister volume which is highly informative for those planning a few years in the Mediterranean – as of course is Ernle Bradford's

Mediterranean, Portrait of a Sea (published in 1971 Hodder and Stoughton, ISBN 0-3401-2868-2) which led me from Brighton to Gibraltar in 1989 for 25 years of exploration of the Mediterranean in my own *Aqua Blue*.

DMB



CORSICA & NORTH SARDINIA – Madeleine and Stephan Strobel, 4th edition. Published in soft covers by Imray Laurie Norie & Wilson and the Royal Cruising Club Pilotage Foundation at £35. 260 A4 pages in full colour. ISBN 978-1-7867-9073-6

The third edition of this guide to one of the most popular cruising areas of the Mediterranean was produced seven years ago in 2013. Much has changed since then, but much has remained the same. Having cruised in the area in 2019 it was a delight to review this fourth edition with its 40 pages of additional information. It also includes a free mobile download – Imray digital charts for use within the Imray Navigator app on iPad, iPhone or Android.

Madeleine and Stephan Strobel have done an excellent job in their two years of exploring the Corsican and Sardinian coastlines in their Bowman 40, *Easy Rider*. The photographs are mostly their own, and these not only capture the beauty and magnificence of the cruising area but also show ports and marinas as they are now. They have not attempted a tourist guide, or a detailed treatise of the complicated histories of Corsica and Sardinia, but rather have focused on the cruising possibilities in this rewarding, though sometimes challenging, area.

There is much new and updated information and the authors and publishers have paid particular attention to making the book easy to use. The sub-headings and different coloured text direct the eye to what is important and relevant. The concise format of the third edition has been retained, but more detailed descriptions of the coastline as it is approached from the sea have been added. This is a very nice touch, in part returning to those lovely hand-drawn views of the coastline and entry points that appeared on charts and in cruising guides before dependency on GPS and electronic charts became the norm.

There is more information on wind and weather patterns, now located at the start of each section thus making it much more relevant to the cruising area being considered and planned. The passage planning guides are clearly presented and many more anchorages added, which is especially important given the cost of marinas. At the same time the authors have included vital information about marine reserves, as well as restrictions on anchoring (to protect posidonia sea grass) where this was previously the norm. In many places mooring buoys are now provided – at a fee – or it is possible to anchor further out. The large scale chartlets are clear, with additional information and symbols displaying, for example, where different facilities are located in ports and marinas. This is very useful, particularly for the first-time visitor.

One of the most significant and helpful changes is to the direction of coverage. The authors have used the prevailing westerly winds in the Bonifacio Strait between Corsica and Sardinia to make passage planning around the coast and islands easier – Corsica is covered anti-clockwise in two sections starting on the northeast coast of Cap Corse; coverage of North Sardinia begins on the northwest coast and proceeds

clockwise via the Arcipelago di La Maddalena. Except for approach waypoints for the ports of refuge, no waypoints are listed or included in the text. The reason given, with which we agree, is to remove the inherent risks of uncritical use of waypoints without reference to updated chart information.

With our 2013 edition we found ourselves using our smartphones and the Navily app, a wiki guide to marinas and anchorages. The Navily app covers many anchorages which rely on the settled summer weather characteristic of this area. Although the fourth edition of *Corsica & North Sardinia* includes more anchorages than the third, the Strobels have quite rightly been prudent and cautious and do not include all the Navily anchorages. While replacing our third edition with this updated version, we would still check what fellow cruisers have to say on Navily.

While Corsica and Sardinia are crowded in July and August with mainly French and Italian yachts, we found that a June visit made for a wonderful cruise. We found plenty of space in anchorages and moorings available even in popular locations such as Calvi and the wonderful Girolata on the west coast of Corsica. We highly recommend both the area and this excellent guide.

N&PH



ADRIATIC PILOT: Croatia, Slovenia, Montenegro, East coast of Italy, Albania – Trevor & Dinah Thompson, 8th edition. Published in hard covers by Imray Laurie Norie & Wilson at £45. 540 A4 pages in full colour throughout. ISBN 978-1-7867-9021-7

In my opinion the Dalmatian Archipelago is the most enjoyable cruising ground in the Mediterranean, and *Aqua Blue* spent eight years wintering up the Timavo River at Darsena Nautech Marine, just northwest of Trieste. From this base we spent every summer sailing and anchoring amongst the Croatian islands south of Istria all the way to Dubrovnik and back north again. After clearing into Croatia at Umag, we often stopped in Pula's far from clean harbour to admire the Roman amphitheatre, which is still in use for concerts – or you can sit in the shade of the intact Roman walls and watch the screeching swifts endlessly circling the 2000-year-old edifice.

One year we ventured much further south and entered Kotor Bay to visit Montenegro, although I had no companions for the 1300+ steps up to the Kotor fortress, which repelled the Turks but not the Royal Navy! We didn't manage Albania with the rumoured minefields, but nowadays there's no reason not to cruise that coastline as well. I used to have the *Adriatic Pilot* in the cockpit every afternoon while entering a new harbour, held open by a winch handle at the appropriate page and harbour sketch, to aid the essential eyeball pilotage. (The Thompsons do not supply waypoints for the digital navigator, since it is impossible to provide the right bearing for every approach.)

Anchored in Corfu it's easy to let the prospect of the sometimes quite fresh afternoon northwesterly *maestral*, occasionally amplified by the *bora*, put you off heading up the Adriatic. But in 2002, armed with an ancient copy of the first edition of the *Adriatic Pilot* (published in black and white in 1986!) we made it to Split and back. By 2004 I had splashed out on the third edition, so after spending one night in the south bay on

Errikousa we crossed to Otranto and worked our way north again up the Italian heel to Vieste, from where we headed back towards Dubrovnik. We didn't sail the Italian coast between Vieste and Chioggia, but this pilot contains all the information you need to do so. It also includes full information on how to enter and berth in the Venice lagoon – another year we managed to anchor off Murano and also in the channel to Burano.

We found that even in a multihull we could often sail northwest parallel to the Croatian coast in the lifted afternoon sea breeze, while the infrequent summer *bora* generally lasts only a few days and is strongest further north – there's a particularly good explanation and diagram of the Adriatic's winds in the *Pilot's* introduction. The Thompsons are to be congratulated on the tremendous amount of research they've undertaken over 34 years and eight editions. Over the years many island anchorages acquired mooring buoys, and the fashionable crowded areas built pricey marinas. The Montenegrin *vignette* (cruising permit) increased in price alarmingly, but the new edition of the *Pilot*, now full of colourful photos and harbour diagrams, promises a cruising tax reduction this year.

I can't recommend the very comprehensive *Adriatic Pilot* – and indeed the Adriatic itself – highly enough. No extended Med cruise should miss the delightful 'Gulf of Venice', and the Thompsons' *Pilot* will ensure you enjoy your time there in safety and help you find a suitable winter berth or yard if staying for more than one season. But bear in mind that the northern Adriatic is cold in winter, so consider heading further south if you live aboard.

DMB



EREBUS: The Story of a Ship – Michael Palin. Published in soft covers by Arrow Books/Penguin at £8.99. 360 129mm x 198mm pages, including 8 colour pages as well as mono images and chartlets in the text. ISBN 978-1-7847-5857-8

It's easy to forget that Michael Palin, in addition to being a Python, a maker of numerous travel documentaries and a past President of the Royal Geographical Society, is also a very fine writer with an eye for an interesting story and, quite clearly, an appetite for detailed research.

The *Erebus* of the title was, as most OCC members will know, one of the two ships which disappeared in the late 1840s under the command of Sir John Franklin, on a mission to find a route linking Baffin Bay in the east with the Bering Sea in the west – 'to make a Northwest Passage to the sea', in the words of Stan Rogers.

This was only part of HMS *Erebus's* story, however. By the time the expedition departed in 1845 she was nearly 20 years old, with several challenging seasons in the Antarctic under her keel – about which I, for one, knew nothing. In 1839, 13 years after launching at Pembroke Dockyard in South Wales, she and near sistership HMS *Terror* set off south under the command of Captain James Clark Ross, said to be 'the handsomest man in the navy' and clearly possessed of great charisma in addition to outstanding seamanship skills. The two ships were away for four years, during which they penetrated further south than any previous ship and spent months among icebergs, skirting the Antarctic Ice Shelf (now known as the Ross Ice Shelf).

That so much is known about this expedition is thanks to the contrasting journals, diaries and letters written by the officers and crew of both vessels, while in John Davis of HMS *Terror* they had a talented artist. One of the most dramatic passages – with excerpts from journals kept by Captain Ross, Robert McCormick, surgeon aboard *Erebus*, and Marine Sergeant William Cunningham of HMS *Terror* – describes a near-disastrous collision between the two ships while avoiding an iceberg, which then drifts down on the disabled *Erebus*. Just reading it makes one's blood run cold. Following repairs in the Falkland Islands – reached via Cape Horn – the two ships returned to England in 1843 to great acclaim.

When another Arctic expedition was suggested two years later it was clear which ships should go. Less obvious was who should lead it, James Clark Ross having declined. Sir John Franklin, the final choice, though a very experienced seaman was, at 59, old by the standards of the time. Following modifications to *Erebus* and *Terror*, both of which were fitted with 25hp steam engines driving retractable propellers – cutting-edge technology for the time – they departed Stromness in Scotland's Orkney Islands on 3rd June 1845 accompanied by the *Barretto Junior* carrying additional stores. The three ships called in at Disko Bay in Greenland from which, with three years' worth of supplies aboard, *Erebus* and *Terror* sailed on 13th July, alone. The two ships were last sighted by whalers later that month, then nothing...

By 1847 pressure was mounting on the Admiralty to authorise a search, driven at least in part by the 'emotional blackmail' of Lady Jane Franklin, desperate for news of her husband. Several expeditions were sent out in 1847/48, including one led by Sir James Clark Ross (knighted on his return from the Antarctic), with three dozen more over the following decade. But although traces were found in 1850, it was not until 1854 that local Inuit confirmed the expedition's fate. Even then Lady Franklin could not accept that her husband was dead. Finally, in 1857, a note was discovered inside a cairn, recording the death of Franklin and the abandonment of both ships.

Fascination with the vanished expedition did not die with Lady Jane Franklin in 1875 however, and periodic attempts were made to solve the mystery. Modern search methods were applied as they became available, with books and documentaries rekindling public interest in the 1980s and '90s. In 1997 the British government signed over ownership of the two ships – should they ever be found – to Canada, and 21 searches of varying seriousness took place between the mid 1990s and 2008. By 2014 sufficient momentum had built up in Canada for a highly professional search to be mounted, with reconnaissance by air, sea and undersea robots equipped with sonar. On 2nd September a sunken vessel of the right build and dimensions was located on the west coast of Adelaide Island, and some ten days later it was positively identified as HMS *Erebus*. The wreck of HMS *Terror* was located two years later.

I found this book fascinating from beginning to end. Michael Palin's research is meticulous – witness the comprehensive bibliography and acknowledgements – and his writing style fast-paced and riveting. The brief timeline on pages 311–313 is very helpful, as is the detailed index. I defy any OCC member not to be carried along by this story, whether they've sailed in polar regions or not. Highly recommended!

AOMH