

REVIEW

REEDS MARITIME FLAG HANDBOOK – Miranda Delmar-Morgan, 2nd edition. Published in soft covers and as an eBook by Adlard Coles Nautical [www.adlardcoles.com] at £9.99 (both formats). 160 104mm x 168mm pages, in full colour throughout. ISBN 978-1-4729-1823-9

The same handy, pocket-sized format as Frank Singleton's *Reeds Weather Handbook*, reviewed in *Flying Fish* 2014/1, this second edition of *Reeds Maritime Flag Handbook* has been revised and updated by OCC member Miranda Delmar-Morgan, with Past Commodore Martin Thomas mentioned among the acknowledgements.

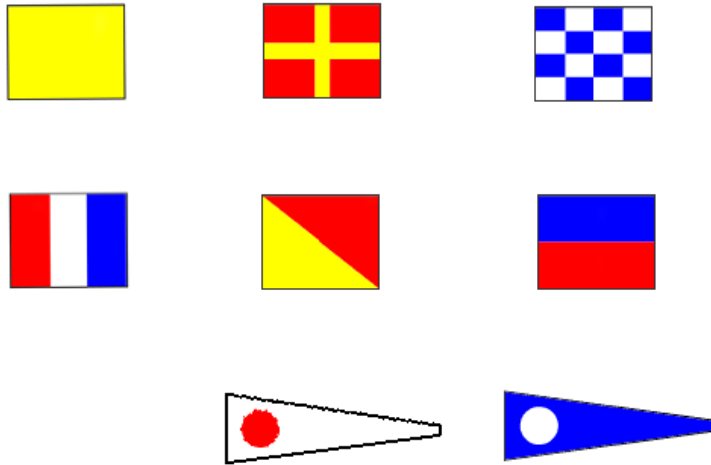
Covering everything from the definition of 'a flag' – not as simple as you might think – to two dozen pages depicting national maritime flags plus four useful appendices, this diminutive but well-organised book packs a lot of information into a very small space.

'Types of Flag' covers Ensigns – legal requirements, etiquette, their use as courtesy ensigns, and illustrates those of some of the world's leading yacht clubs as well as some historic examples; Jacks – somewhat similar, but flown from a jackstaff at the bow; Burgees; Other flags – including membership flags (often, though incorrectly, referred to as 'house flags'), owner's flags, racing flags, prize flags and so-called 'battle flags'; and finally Defence and official flags. Next comes the International Code of Signals, including regional variations such as the red and white 'diver down' flag used in North America and the Caribbean; flags used to signal distress, and those flags commonly used by race organisers.

An interesting section on Flag Etiquette includes Flags and the Law – more than etiquette, surely? – most of which, although intended primarily for British vessels, will be applicable worldwide. The thorny question of where on a masted vessel each type of flag should be flown, and in what order of seniority, is clearly explained. A selection of 168 yacht club burgees and special ensigns fill the next 21 pages, followed by 24 pages of national maritime flags – not always the same as the national flag flown ashore.

It might be thought that there is no longer a place for flags in our increasingly electronic world, except perhaps for decoration, but few things are as reliable as the Mk.1 eyeball – not to mention the sheer pleasure of either raising or recognising the appropriate flag(s) correctly flown.

Finally a quick test: what do the flag hoists below signify? If you don't know, of *Reeds Maritime Flag Handbook* would be a tenner well spent! (Answers on page 103)



Key to flag hoists (left to right):

QT = You should not anchor. You are going to foul my anchor

RO1 = My propeller is fouled by hawser or rope

NE2 = You should proceed with caution. Submarines are exercising in this area