



ISLE OF WIGHT FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY



February 2026

Number 160

Thomson Bequest

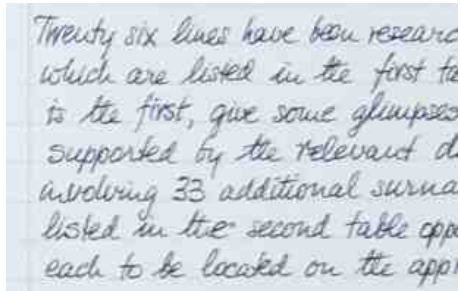
In October Mrs Katherine THOMSON generously donated to the Society the following items of family history research compiled by her father, DF Riley:

- 18 folders of beautifully organised research into dozens of Island families starting with RILEY and RIDETT
- A copy of the limited-edition book 'From Carisbrooke to Canada – The Riley and Reed Families' by John L Riley
- A folder of research into a variant distribution map of the URRY surname



18 Folders, a limited-edition book and research into the URRY surname

Mrs Thomson has kindly given us permission to scan and publish these items on our website and/or Flickr pages and to make them available for family history research.



Sample text from the introduction

The research was completed in 1991, well before the era of digital online databases and consists of extensive details meticulously written up and indexed in scrupulously neat handwriting with copies/photos of many original information sources such as wills and gravestones.

Steve Newberry (IWFHS Member 2189)

Journal Editor

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Contents

Thomson Bequest	Inside Front Cover
Programme of Events Spring 2026	2
Editorial	3
Heritage Resource Centre	4
From the Desk in Westward Ho!	5
Chairman's Report February 2026	7
Our 2026 Project – 'Education on the Island'	8
William Schaw Lindsay, Victorian Entrepreneur	13
National Coastwatch Institution and Needles NCI	19
Membership Secretary's Report Feb 2026	21
Journals and Indexing	22
Annual General Meeting 2026	23
Di Harding Award Winners 2025	24
Coral of Cowes	25
What Happened to Uncle BUCK?	41
Deaths	45
New Members	46
The Minster - ODC 2025	Inside Back Cover

Programme of Events Spring 2026

Date	Subject	Speaker
2nd February	A Talk on Cowes	Geoff BANKS
2nd March	Isle of Wight Bus and Coach Museum	Andrew MORRIS
13th April	The Big Class - J Class Yacht Racing in the Thirties	Rosemary JOY
11th May	Isle of Wight small ships at Dunkirk	Michael MILLS

For more information and an up-to-date list of future events visit

www.isle-of-wight-fhs.co.uk/events

Monthly Meetings are held (unless stated otherwise) at
Arreton Community Hall, Main Road, Arreton, Newport PO30 3AD

Doors open at 1:30pm talks start at 2:00pm

Admission members £2, non-members £3

2026 Calendar Year Subscriptions

Standard Membership (eJournal)	£8
Classic UK Membership	£16
Classic Rest of the World	£30

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The Isle of Wight Family History Society takes no responsibility for articles submitted to the Journal, nor does it necessarily agree with opinions expressed.

Authors are expected to have checked for factual accuracy and to have obtained the necessary permissions for lengthy quotations and the use of illustrations.

Editorial

The new 'Education on the Island' project is now under way and continues in parallel with the 'Pubs Project' started last year. Full details can be found within.

Our full Spring programme of exciting monthly meetings is scheduled through till the summer; I hope to see many of you there.

My grateful thanks go out to the authors of the fascinating articles included in this Journal. Why not write a few words about your own research successes (or failures) and submit them for publication in the Journal? It's a great way to organise your thoughts and receive feedback to help you with brick walls and dead ends.

Steve NEWBERRY (IWFHS Member 2189)

Journal Editor

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Cover Picture

The Technical Institute and Seely Library in Upper St James' Street, Newport were built in 1904 by the Isle of Wight County Council on the site of a former nursery.

The Institute provided 'technical education' lectures in many subjects, including horticulture and evening education for adults.

In 1907 Newport County Secondary Grammar School moved into the building and remained until 1958. Since then, the building has been the location of various educational establishments and is currently the Island VI Form College.

(IWCP and Wightpedia)

Non-Committee Officers

BMD Index Coordinator	Jon MATTHEWS	bmd.iowfhs@gmail.com
Newspaper Reports Project	Tony BEVIS	newspapers.iowfhs@gmail.com
Pedigree Index	Mike HOAR	pindex.iowfhs@gmail.com

The deadline for the May Journal is 1st April 2026

Heritage Resource Centre

West Chapel
Northwood Cemetery
Newport Road
Cowes PO31 7ER

Opening Times

Tuesdays 1 pm to 4 pm
Wednesdays 10 am to 1 pm

Please do not use this street address for correspondence

Email enquiries to research.iowfhs@gmail.com

We can also be available at other times by arrangement with the Librarian, Hazel PULLEN.

The Friends of Northwood Cemetery will have representatives on hand at other times during the week.

We are pleased to be part of the Heritage Resource Centre at the West Chapel, Northwood Cemetery.

Northwood Cemetery is a working cemetery, managed by the Isle of Wight Council Bereavement Services section. Priority is given to any funeral services and visitors should be respectful of the needs of people attending such services and other visitors to the grounds.

There is very limited parking at the Cemetery. Visitors **must not** use the nearby Medical Centre Car Park. The Park & Ride car park at Somerton is a few hundred metres away (one bus stop).

Use the Southern Vectis bus service (Route 1) from Cowes Red Jet Terminal or Newport Bus Station and stop at Cowes Medical Centre. Only use the service showing '**Park & Ride**' which operates approximately every 15 minutes. Buses showing 'Round House' use a different route.

A Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant toilet facility is available to visitors. We have facilities to copy, scan and print materials for personal use (subject to copyright restrictions).

The Heritage Resource Centre will be 'free to use' but donations towards our running costs and any materials will be welcomed.

Non-members will be asked to become temporary members (just a quick signature and a suggested minimum donation of £1 is all that is required) to enable us to offer access to privileged material available to our full members.

From the Desk in Westward Ho!



Although I am writing this in 2025, it will be February by the time that you read it - and International Women's Day, 8th March, will not be far off. It is important that we give the women on our family tree as much research time and exposure as the men, even though it is often easier to find men in the records.

I have written about women's history before but I thought that this time I would try to direct it more closely to the Isle of Wight. Firstly, you may be aware of Daisy Plant's book *A History of Women's Lives on the Isle of Wight*, which was published by Pen and Sword in 2019. This tells the story of ordinary, yet in their own way extraordinary Island women who lived between 1850 and 1950. Then there is Susanna Hoe's *The Isle of Wight: women, history, books and places* published in 2024 by The Women's History Press. Slightly more well known women feature in this volume.

Perhaps you might be interested in an article by Daniel Swan, "*We all had to do our bit*": young women war workers in Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight 1939-1945. This can be freely downloaded from [www.academia.edu/3186502/ We all had to do our bit young women war workers in Portsmouth and the Isle of Wight 1939 1945](http://www.academia.edu/3186502/We_all_had_to_do_our_bit_young_women_war_workers_in_Portsmouth_and_the_Isle_of_Wight_1939_1945)

What, though, about your own female ancestors whose stories also deserve to be told, perhaps in the form of an article for this journal. Was she perhaps involved in the women's suffrage movement, which was perhaps surprisingly, active on the island? Becca Aspden's article tells you more here: www.mappingwomenssuffrage.org.uk/post/stirring-the-pot-visitors-who-grew-the-women-s-suffrage-movement-on-the-isle-of-wight.

Was she part of the Voluntary Aid Detachment (VAD) during the First World War? You can turn to the Society's own website for this www.isle-of-wight-fhs.co.uk/databases/warservice.

There are school and newspaper indexes on the website too, in which that ancestress may appear. *The Isle of Wight Times* from 1862-1913 (with gaps) is available via

www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk or www.findmypast.co.uk.

Maybe your female family member won a prize for her knitting at the village show, was a member of the Women's Institute, a teacher, the one who provided the teas for church functions or ended up in court. If so, you may find her in a press report.

How about using the 1921 census to find out where she worked, or learn more about her home using the 1910 Valuation Office Records 'Lloyd George Domesday', available on The Genealogist subscription website

www.thegenealogist.co.uk/lloyd-george-domesday/.

Many women worked for the post office. There are appointment books and pension records held by the Postal Museum that are now available on Ancestry www.ancestry.co.uk/search/collections/1933/. This includes a number of women amongst the 490 island entries. A tip here when searching is not to put anything in the location box but instead to put Isle of Wight in as a keyword.

For a wealth of resources about researching women in general, try www.fewforgottenwomen.com.

If you need more help and encouragement, you could enrol on my five week, online course, *Putting your Female Ancestors into Context*, that starts on 2 June. The course can be followed in your own time and it guides you through writing the biography of a female ancestor. Details can be found at

www.pharostutors.com.

Good luck! I look forward to reading some stories of your female ancestors in future editions of the Journal.

Janet FEW (IWFHS Member 50)

Vice-President

Email: jfewhistory@gmail.com

Chairman's Report February 2026

A belated New Year's greeting to all!

Since my last report we have been 'carrying on as normal', with little in the way of new developments other than the commencement of the 'Education on the Island' project, described more fully on [page 8](#) in my report of the talk I gave at Arreton earlier in January.

Mike Hoar has managed to complete the work on the Pedigree Index section of the website databases, meaning that all the pedigrees which we have accumulated over the years are now in digital form. Lynn Jarman is continuing to work on the material in the Charlie Taylor Legacy.

We also had a donation of 18 beautifully compiled folders on Island families from the Thomson bequest – Steve Newberry describes these [inside the front cover](#).

Another donation was the photo album of the Stone family, which has been digitised and added to our Flickr albums. We are always happy to consider such donations, but we cannot take back copies of Journals or Family History magazines as they are often out of date and take up too much storage space.

The winter weather has deterred many visitors from coming to see us at the Heritage Resource Centre, but we do offer a warm welcome, so please come to see us on Tuesday afternoon or Wednesday morning.

We shall hold our Annual General Meeting at the beginning of June as we did last year, divorcing it from the One Day Conference. The relevant paperwork for this will be published on the website and can be found on [page 23](#).

One piece of business which we have been considering is the future format of the 'Di Harding Awards'. After 17 years it is most likely that many of our current members may not be aware who Di was. The prize structure also needs to be reviewed. Originally, we awarded cash prizes, but this got tricky in remitting prizes to overseas members, and

many winners simply donated them back to us; then we changed to membership subscriptions which also causes some difficulties if winners have already prepaid their subscriptions – so the Membership System sometimes needs to allow for up to 4 years subscriptions ‘in the bank’ as it were. The value of the award is also dependent on the level of subscription the member holds.

So, we are looking for suggestions as to how to encourage folk to contribute to the Journal. We could continue the awards with gift cards as prizes; have the Committee judge the awards; and rename the Award to reflect the current position eg ‘Journal Authors’ Award’ rather than ‘The Di Harding Award’. Let us have your views.

The other perennial issue which we and similar societies have is that we have an ageing demographic. Not only does this mean that we have falling membership numbers, but the roles performed by committee members are at risk if a committee member leaves us for whatever reason. Let’s just say that most of our committee members are in their 8th decade, and leave it at that! But again, any suggestions for widening the membership base, and getting fresh blood on the committee, are welcomed.

Geoff ALLAN (IWFHS Member 392)
Chairman
chairman.iowfhs@gmail.com

Our 2026 Project – ‘Education on the Island’

This is a report of the talk that Geoff Allan gave on January 5 at Arreton - it is obviously ‘one I prepared earlier’ as the deadline for the Journal copy was a week before the talk itself.

The ‘Education on the Island Project’ (also variously called the ‘Schools / Teachers / Pupils Project’) is similar to the project we launched last year, covering Island licenced premises and licensees aka the ‘Pubs Project’ which is still going on quietly behind the scenes.

The intention behind this project is similar; that is, to capture and collate as much information as we can about Island schools, other educational establishments such as the Royal Naval College at Osborne, their buildings, their teachers, and in some cases, their pupils.

We appreciate that this is a massive exercise and it will become one of those never-ending projects that we in the family history world love so much.

We also want to engage as many people as possible – including the Record Office, and maybe schools themselves, to get as full a picture as possible, including the context and legal frameworks which established many of the schools.

We had already made a tentative start on this with the work done by Val DIEBELIUS on the Parkhurst/Hunnyhill School Logs and Admissions Registers; and we can build on this to widen the scope. However, we also need to restrict the scope in some respects to avoid falling foul of privacy concerns, especially the GDPR (General Data Protection Regulations) in the United Kingdom.

The data has been organised into 5 main areas:

1. Schools – basic information such as location, their establishment and subsequent history, including trying to document the many changes of name that schools have had to reflect the changes in the way that the education system has changed. Although we could include School Logs, in practice these do not have much biographical information.
2. Teachers – basic biographical information, training, and employment.
3. Pupils – Admission registers – these give dates of admission, discharge, and some biographical information such as date of birth, parent or guardian and address. We don't intend to build up comprehensive biographies for individuals.

4. Pupils – other nominal rolls – census returns often give a decennial snapshot of pupils who were resident boarders; and other lists such as Rolls of Honour or War Memorials. Named group photos are also a good source as are reports of prize giving in the local newspapers.
5. Photos and documents – we are building up collections of historic and contemporary photographs and documents for schools, teachers and pupils.



Denmark Road, Cowes – Under 15 Football XI 1932-3. Can you spot the boy who became a well-known TV presenter in the 1950s to 1980s? (Answer [inside back cover](#))

Sources we are using include material already published in book form eg 'If you were a Barton Bonehead this book is for you' by Brian Greening; village and town histories, census returns, the 1939 Register, original material such as the Gurnard School Admissions registers (kindly loaned to us by David Finch, the current Deputy Head), Cemetery records from Northwood, Newport and Carisbrooke, and newspaper articles.

Caveats – we do not intend this to be a replica of ‘Friends Reunited’ although inevitably there will be an element of mutual recognition between former pupils and teachers; there will be a cut off birth date of 1926 for pupils; and we will probably not record information much later than the mid-1950s to avoid potential concerns from anyone attending or teaching at schools since then. We will continue to examine obituaries later than that to record earlier careers.

Methodology – although some researchers are building up file notes on paper, ultimately, we wish to capture as much as possible digitally.

We have established 3 main spreadsheets in our Google workspace, to document schools, teachers, and pupils; a fourth spreadsheet records indexes of any photos or documents but this will probably be restricted to the data manager as the images need to be stored in a different digital location to the main website databases.

As mentioned earlier we have some school admission records which have mainly been captured already. FindMyPast has admission records for Arreton; Barton Board School; Carisbrooke National School; Denmark Road, Cowes; Grange Road, East Cowes; Holy Trinity National School, Ryde; Newport Blue School; Newport Board



Grange Road Council Schools, East Cowes. 1913

School; Newport Grammar School; Shorwell National School; and Whitwell National School. We shall not attempt to duplicate these holdings.

On our website:

We have built prototype pages, which are available to paid up members, covering the main areas of schools, teachers and pupils. The Admission Registers (School Logs) page for Parkhurst/Hunnyhill and Chillerton had already been developed but may need some modifications to fit in with the other aspects of the records. Gurnard and Newport Board School information is being added to the admissions.

What we would like you to do:

- Let us have anything you think will fit into the scope of the project.
- Get involved in researching and filling in the gaps for any aspects, particularly people; we would let you have access to the shared spreadsheets in our Google workspace.
- Get out and about photographing buildings, particularly the older ones, and those which are no longer in use as Schools, where they still exist.

What will the outcome be?

A body of research available to Members to help investigate the lives and careers of their relatives, whether as pupils or teachers.

This will be the theme of our 2026 Conference, so if you are willing to talk at the Conference on any aspect of this subject, making use perhaps of any previous research you may have done, then let us know.

Geoff ALLAN (IWFHS Member 392)
Chairman
chairman.iowfhs@gmail.com

William Schaw Lindsay, Victorian Entrepreneur

A summary of Bill Lindsay's talk on 6th October 2025

Bill gave us a talk entitled 'William Schaw Lindsay, Victorian Entrepreneur'. It focused on his great-great-grandfather who, in his day, was akin to Richard Branson in merchant shipping. In the mid-1850s he was the owner of 22 ocean-going vessels and chartered 700 ships per annum.

Whilst investigating his family tree, Bill discovered that his forefather's extensive unpublished diaries were held in the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich. They were sold by Bill's distant cousins for £20,000 in 1982. It took Bill six years to transcribe them, and he wrote his ancestor's biography as a result. The diaries included anecdotes of many famous Victorians, including Dickens, Disraeli, Garibaldi, Brunel, and Lincoln among others. They also include references to his time on the Isle of Wight. Bill split his forefather's biography into seven parts. He had had such an amazing life that each part encompassed different aspects.

Part 1. At Sea. William Schaw LINDSAY was born in Ayr, within sight of the sea, in 1815. His father died a failed businessman when William was four and his mother died when he was ten. His Reverend Uncle William SCHAW and his aunt took him under their wing and provided schooling in Ayr Academy for four years. However, the teenager did not want to take advantage of their hospitality so he ran away to sea. His uncle gave him five pounds which was promptly stolen on his way to the docks in Glasgow by someone he befriended en route. He therefore started out life with small change; two shillings and sixpence.

He arrived in Liverpool docks, spending six weeks visiting ships trying to obtain employment, before finally securing an apprenticeship on an ocean-going vessel going to the West Indies. The six weeks taught him a lifelong lesson; he had had to survive with no accommodation, no food and no money and he had resorted to begging. His diaries are full of his adventures at sea and his near-death experiences. These

included escaping yellow fever (16 of the ship's crew of 31 died), being attacked by an Arab marauder, whom he shot dead and experiencing many severe gales, one of which shifted cargo across the deck into his leg and broke it. He progressed from cabin boy to captain within nine years.

Part 2. Success. He retired from the sea and approached the shipping company to secure a position on land as an agent for them, shipping coal from their newly acquired coal mine in Hartlepool to southern ports. Whilst living there he saw the destruction of a ship on the rocks near his house and was determined to build a lighthouse so that shipwrecks would occur much less often. He succeeded and for many years it was known as Lindsay's lighthouse. At this time, 1843, he married Helen STEWART from Glasgow and four years later they had a son.

After a few years in the northeast they moved to London where he set up a ship brokerage. Business boomed and his company quickly became one of the largest shipping companies in Britain. He won contracts to sell coal to large steamship lines, notably P&O, and chartered many ships. He then moved into ship ownership, building ocean-going vessels. At first, he commissioned sailing ships but he then ordered auxiliary steamers; large sailing ships with a small engine which could be used in calm weather and to navigate rivers and harbours. These auxiliary steamships of his were more profitable than fully powered steamers whose engines were not very efficient. Eventually more effective engines were developed and fully powered steamships became more favoured.

He used his ships to assist emigrants travelling to Australia. The gold rush dramatically increased the numbers of passengers wishing to go there. In 18 months, the ships sent out between five and six thousand passengers.

Part 3. Politics. Following his successful start in shipping, Lindsay decided to stand for parliament as a Liberal. He chose to represent a port town. He stood for Newport near Cardiff but lost to the local iron ore company owner who told his workers that if they did not vote for him,



The author with his wife by the painting of twelve of William Schaw Lindsay's ships.

Painting owned by the National Maritime Museum. Stockholm, Sweden. SM 20028.

they would be out of a job. As a result, Lindsay did not win although some brave voters did vote for him. During the same year, 1852, he opted to stand for Dartmouth. This time he was up against an admiral who engaged in tricks too. Naval ships entered the port and put on a show encouraging voters to choose the admiral. Needless to say, Lindsay lost again. But it was third time lucky in Tynemouth on the northeast coast. His knowledge of the sea and maritime business meant that governments called on his expertise.

Part 4. The Crimean War. No sooner had he entered Parliament than his newly built ship, the *SS Robert Lowe*, was requisitioned by the government as a transport ship carrying troops and cargo to the Crimea. The ship was built by Scotts (later to be Scott Lithgo) but it was delivered a year late. Lindsay demanded an apology from the company, but they refused to give it. He said that if they didn't give it, he would



William Schaw Lindsay
newly elected MP 1854

take them to court. They did not do so and as a result a court case followed. Lindsay won £20,000 but he refused to take a penny. He knew that if he did so thousands of ship workers would be made redundant. He received his apology from Scotts, however, together with some money for the poor of Glasgow.

Six of Lindsay's ships were used in the war. One ship transported Florence Nightingale and her nurses to the Crimea. As an MP he learnt that mismanagement was causing significant problems, and he complained about it in Parliament. In particular, clothing and blankets were mislaid and many soldiers died of cold and disease in the harsh winter. Lindsay was one of 40 MPs who formed a new party, the Administration Reform Association, to challenge the government. This party only lasted six months but the government took note and made reforms to reduce mismanagement.

Part 5. Shipping Business Continues. Following the Crimean war, many merchant ships became redundant, and shipowners had to find employment for them. He approached the government to run a Royal Mail line to South Africa and India. Six of his ships were employed doing so. Although the shipping line broke even, it only lasted a year. Later two of his ships were used transporting immigrants to Vancouver in Canada. They were known as bride ships as 60 of the passengers were single women seeking a new life and marriage there. One of the ship's voyages was full of mishaps. There was mutiny on board and passengers assisted sailing the ship and stoking the engines. Half the crew deserted in San Francisco and finally as the ship approached Vancouver the coal had run out and spare wood, such as deckchairs, were burnt as fuel to complete the journey.

Part 6. The American Civil War. In 1860, six months prior to the American Civil War, Lindsay travelled to the Northern States of America on a lecture tour. He was keen that there was commonality in Navigation Laws between the US and Britain. This involved how best to handle such events as sailors deserting or being involved in criminal activities where different approaches were being taken. During his tour he met the President-Elect, Abraham Lincoln, and he travelled on the

railway where he was escorted by none other than Charles Dickens' brother. He visited Washington to meet President Buchanan and members of his cabinet.

He learnt all about the Southern States' grievances and he sympathised with them. He felt that they were being taxed more heavily than Northerners and had fewer representatives in the Senate. He was also a supporter of Free Trade, unlike the Union. Historians described Lindsay's role in supporting southern independence as a nation. They said that 'he became the leading Confederate spokesperson' in Parliament and he 'was almost like an unofficial Confederate representative at Napoleon's court.'



President-Elect Abraham Lincoln

He visited Emperor Napoleon four times during the war. They discussed the ineffectiveness of the Northern blockade of the Southern ports (to prevent goods and arms being transported to the South) and intimated that France might consider recognizing the South if Britain did so too. He was very much anti-slavery, but he was concerned that if the two million slaves were released at once, they would be left without food, shelter and accommodation, as he had been in Liverpool Docks as a teenager. One of Lindsay's biggest contributions was assisting the South in building a navy in Britain. However, his role came to end when he had a stroke shortly before the war's end, and he was confined to a wheelchair for the last 12 years of his life.

Part 7. Maritime Historian and Author. Lindsay sold his ships and turned to building houses in Shepperton, where he had a manor house, and in Bournemouth where he built a house for the winter. He wrote his diaries and several novels. His greatest achievement was writing the *History of Merchant Shipping and Ancient Commerce*. In it is an amusing tale of being invited by Brunel to tour his ship the *SS Great Eastern* which was being built on the Thames in London. Lindsay

foretold the fact that the ship would not be commercially successful. He died in 1877, aged 61, and is buried in Shepperton.

Links to Isle of Wight. Lindsay visited the Isle of Wight on several occasions. Firstly when as a ship's apprentice en route to the West Indies, he rowed the captain ashore to Ryde. He remembered the incident many years later, just before the Crimean War, when he visited the town again to recover from a short breakdown. During the visit he and his friend and fellow MP, Richard COBDEN, travelled to Portsmouth to inspect the Naval Dockyards. He also met Reverend BERTHON and tested his lifeboat (a replica of which is in the Classic Boat Museum in Cowes on the Isle of Wight). He stayed with Charles SEELY MP in Brook House when Giuseppe GARIBALDI was there.

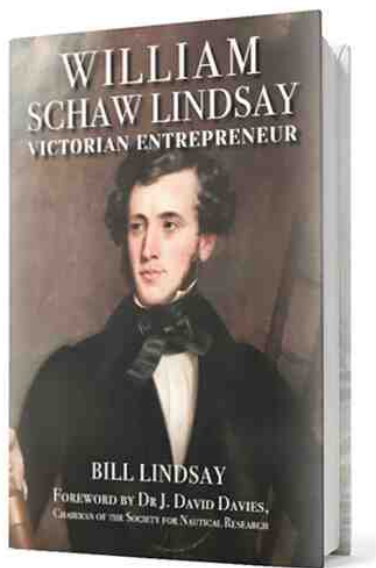
Lindsay's life was highlighted in a book published in 1868 entitled *Clever boys of our time who became famous men*. He was listed amongst others including Dickens, Disraeli, and Faraday. It said of him: 'A poor friendless orphan, cabin boy, great shipowner, and member of Parliament. Why, it seems a fable – it seems too improbable to be true; but it is true, nevertheless.'

Bill Lindsay's book *William Schaw Lindsay Victorian Entrepreneur* was published by Amberley Publishing in 2023 and can be obtained via Bill's Website

<https://billlindsayhistorian.com/>

Bill is a member of various maritime societies and is editor of the online magazine *Topmasts* for the Society for Nautical Research.

Bill LINDSAY (non-member)



Bill Lindsay's biography of his great-great-grandfather.

• National Coastwatch Institution and Needles NCI

A talk by Jeremy THOMAS on Monday 3rd November 2025

NCI Motto: Eyes along the coast

Objective: To assist in the protection and preservation of life at sea and along the United Kingdom coastline.

By 1990 all the salaried coastguard personnel had been removed from their watch stations. The NCI (National Coastwatch Institution) was begun as a single station in 1994 at the Lizard Point in Cornwall. There are now 61 Stations and 2867 Watchkeepers. One local station



overlooks the Needles, 410 feet above Scratchells Bay in the New Battery. Jeremy showed us a short video of the inside of the lookout.

Needles NCI was awarded Declared Facility Status in 2014 making it a recognised part of the Search and Rescue (SAR) Community. Needles NCI was

awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service in 2016. There are 71 people on the strength including watchkeepers under training.

For a new member of the public joining the NCI, the eligibility criteria are: good (corrected) sight, good (corrected) hearing and basic fitness. They are given a mentor to assist them through training which takes



place on watch and through lectures and scenarios. A manual is provided as is VHF radio and first-aid training. An assessment takes place when both trainee and mentor feel ready and when at least 12 watches and three months have been completed.

A qualified watchkeeper is asked to do two four-hour watches a month and help with fundraising activities. When on duty they keep a watch for all vulnerable craft and people in our sector using a hierarchy of vulnerability. They also log what they do and see in the log book. They take weather readings three times in the watch, patrol the local area and broadcast the weather and sea state to all ships. They monitor a



number of radio channels especially channel 16, the distress channel. They are ready to assist the SAR on channel 0 if requested and are ready to provide radio checks, AIS (vessel tracking) checks and weather and sea state information locally on channel 65, the NCI's dedicated channel.

In an emergency, watchkeepers follow the Spot, Plot, Report, Respond protocol. It is HM Coastguard who coordinate any response and we respond to their requests for further local information and changes in the situation. Jeremy gave examples of two incidents they have been involved in and showed pictures of some of the more interesting sightings.

NCI is a charitable trust overseen by trustees. All personnel are unpaid volunteers with executives receiving expenses only. All stations are financially independent and must fund their own running costs and a capitation fee of £30 payable to National HQ. All watchkeepers supply their own uniform.

Jeremy THOMAS (non-member)
NCI Watchkeeper

Membership Secretary's Report Feb 2026

Many thanks to you all for your cheery correspondence over the past year, along with Christmas good wishes accompanying payments which have been sent. It has been so nice to correspond with you all and I look forward to doing so again throughout 2026. Welcome also to more than 70 new members throughout 2025.

The Membership Information page and Self-Service User Guide are there to guide you through use of our website. We are keen to iron out any glitches which occur, so please let me know of any issues you may come across, giving as much detail as you can to point us to the area of difficulty.

A new payment option has been set up for those wishing to make a simple card payment as an alternative to Paypal. The IOW Family History Society Sumup store can be used for purchasing memberships, here's the link:

<https://isle-of-wight-family-history-society.sumupstore.com/products>

Paying by card via Sumup is easy – select the item you wish to purchase: Enter your name etc, then payment card details and you are done. You will receive an e-mail acknowledgement of the payment.

Thanks go to all prompt membership renewals - this makes it so much easier. Also thanks to those members who have included donations which will contribute to the success of our Society in the coming year.

A reminder to members regarding our new subscription rates which changed from 1st January 2022 – please ensure that you have cancelled any recurring PayPal payments which now do not cover the subscription fee. I'm happy to take any queries about making payments.

My good wishes to you all for the coming year and I look forward to meeting many of you at this year's AGM or One Day Conference.

Gerry NEWBERRY (IWFHS Member 2189)

Membership Secretary

membership.secretary.iowfhs@gmail.com

Journals and Indexing

Are you searching for information about a place or person?

Each article in every Journal is indexed on our website in a database containing place names and people's surnames.

NB Only current paid-up members can access this information.

Access old archived Journals

From the **Other Resources** pull down menu, select **IoWFHS Journals** then **Journal Archive**. Click on a Journal number to download a PDF and view or save the document.

Contents Pages

From the **Other Resources** pull down menu, select **IoWFHS Journals**, then **Journals Contents** to select a year, then the tab for a Journal. You will then see its Contents Page.

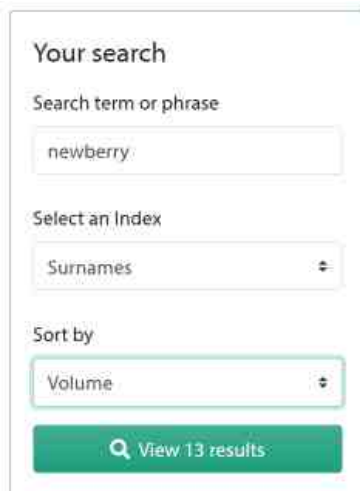
Search Journal Indexes

From the **Other Resources** pull down menu, select **IoWFHS Journals**, then **Search Journal Indexes**.

A brief description explains how to do a search and use of 'wildcards'. In the lower left corner you can enter search criteria (filters):

- Text you want to find
- Category. Select - Location, Surnames or General
- Choose how you want the results sorted; Alphabetically or by Journal Volume number

When the results are listed, click on a Journal number to download a PDF and view or save the document.



The screenshot shows a web form titled "Your search". It contains three input fields: "Search term or phrase" with the text "newberry", "Select an Index" with a dropdown menu showing "Surnames", and "Sort by" with a dropdown menu showing "Volume". Below these fields is a green button with a magnifying glass icon and the text "View 13 results".

Gerry NEWBERRY (IWFHS Member 2189)
Membership Secretary
membership.secretary.iowfhs@gmail.com

Di Harding Award Winners 2025

At the Annual General Meeting held in May 2009 it was agreed that, in order to perpetuate the name of Di HARDING (1950-2008), a stalwart of the IWFHS, an award would be given annually to the authors of the best three articles submitted by members and published in the Journal.



Hilary LLOYD (IWFHS Member 14) wins 3 years' free subscription for her article 'The Mystery of Francis Patrick CLEMENTS' which was published on page 21 of the May Journal.



Dorothy SCOTT (IWFHS Member 6103) wins 2 years' free subscription for her article 'Finding my roots on the Isle of Wight' which was published on page 39 of the August Journal.



Liz POTTINGER (IWFHS Member 7396) wins a year's free subscription for her article 'A Drayman's Day - Christmas Eve 1939' which was published on page 34 of the November Journal.

Steve NEWBERRY (IWFHS Member 2189)

Journal Editor

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Coral of Cowes

The following refers to an article I wrote that was published in the November 2016 issue, (No 123) of the Isle of Wight FHS Journal entitled 'A Snippet in Time'. It explored the life of my great grandfather, George Edward COOK who served as master of the yawl *Coral*, then owned by Francis Templeman MEW, chairman of W.B. Mew Langton & Co Ltd, a significant brewery that held the Royal Warrant of Appointment to Queen Victoria's household at Osborne. The brewery was located on Crocker Street in Newport.

During my research into my great grandfather's service on *Coral*, I discovered that she was built in 1900 at the boatyard in Cowes of Charles HILL, a yard that was renowned for the building of often custom designed wooden sailing yachts, built to a high quality of workmanship. *Coral* was designed by Harley MEAD and first appeared in the Lloyd's Register in 1901. Her original owner was F.T. Mew, with Cowes listed as her home port. Her official number was 111379; her Signal letters were SDQR.

Armed with this information I'd gathered about *Coral*, I made the decision to return to the Isle of Wight, my birthplace, to continue my family history research. I had a number of genealogical threads to follow but my priority was clear: to find a photograph and uncover more details about *Coral*, the vessel my great grandfather had once served aboard.

Having once lived in Cowes, I knew exactly where to begin my search, Beken of Cowes, famous for over 130 years of photographing the Island's vibrant sailing scene. This seemed the perfect starting point. I stepped into their shop with a sense of purpose and hope.

A friendly gentleman welcomed me inside (though I regret not remembering his name) and I shared with him everything I had discovered so far: the boat's builder, her designer and her Registry details. He listened intently and then nodded with recognition. 'Coral, or Coral of Cowes as she became known was quite a famous yacht,' he told me. 'She won the Royal Yacht Squadron's premier race, the King's Cup, not once but twice, back in 1926 and again in 1928.'

Unfortunately, he added, her story ended in tragedy. In 2021, *Coral*, had sunk while moored in Souda Bay Harbour, Crete. Despite the sombre news, I was excited when he began searching Beken's now digitised photo archives. And then, there she was. A beautiful black and white image of *Coral* appeared on his desktop screen. I felt a wave of excitement.

But that joy was sadly short lived. Cross referencing the photo with the Registry details I'd supplied, we soon realized something was wrong. The vessel on screen wasn't the same *Coral*. The dates and specifications simply didn't match. Disappointment washed over me. I left the shop feeling deflated, thinking how wonderful it would have been to see a photograph of the very yacht my great grandfather had once mastered. What I didn't know then was that this journey was far from over and that a twist in the tale was still to come.

A few weeks after I'd returned home, there was an unexpected email in my inbox. It was from a fellow member of the Isle of Wight Family History Society, a man called Ken WHITE. He had read the article I had submitted and had really enjoyed it, especially when he realised that the yacht I had written about was *Coral*. As it turned out, Ken had a personal connection to her as well! It turned out that his maternal great grandfather Clifford William WILLIS had served aboard *Coral* as a Steward between May to August 1921. Suddenly, I realised that *Coral* was no longer just a thread in my family's story; she was part of someone else's too! Ken had attached to his email, a scanned page from his great grandfather's diary that he had inherited. Along with a black and white scanned photograph taken on board *Coral* over a century ago!

Moving the cursor over the image, I felt a flutter of nerves and excitement; I took a deep breath and clicked to open it. It seemed a long wait before the photo appeared on screen, and there they were, the crew of *Coral*, frozen in time standing on her deck. Clifford William Willis, dressed in white, with possibly my great grandfather¹ George Edward Cook in front. For the first time I could be looking into the face

¹ Although I was almost certain, I needed additional evidence to confirm that the man in the photograph was indeed my great grandfather.

of the man whose story I had traced through records and registers for a long time. As I studied the photo over the following days, it gradually became clear to me, it had been taken from another photograph. This recalled a distant memory. I must have been around 12 years old when my mother told me about a large photograph of her grandfather aboard a yacht, surrounded by the entire crew.



The crew of the Coral:
Front: George Edward Cook
In white: Clifford William Willis

There is no doubt that the men in the photograph are standing on the deck of *Coral*, the clue being on four of the crew members sweaters. The insignia there also confirms that she was registered at the Royal Victoria Yacht Club that was located in Ryde.

May 9th 1928 Started as Yacht Coral from Ryde

14th 10.30 AM and family joined
17th 10.30 AM and family left
21st Left Ryde and anchored in Cowes Roads. 3.30 PM and family joined.
22nd Laying at Hamble.
23rd Cruising in Solent.
24th Cruising in Solent.
25th Cruising in Solent.
26th Laying at Lymington.
27th Laying at Lymington.
28th Laying at Lymington.
June 1st Laying at Hamble and Cowes.
2nd Left the Hamble. 3.30 pm arrived 4 pm.
4th Laying at Portland.
5th Laying at Portland.
6th Left Portland 8 am arrived Hamble 7 pm.
8th Laying at Cowes.
11th Left Cowes 5.15 pm arrived Bournemouth 7 pm.
12th Left Bournemouth 8 am.

12th Arrived Bournemouth 8 am.
14th Laying at Bournemouth.
15th Laying at Bournemouth.
16th Left Bournemouth 8 am arrived Fawley 9.30 pm.
17th Left Fawley 8 am (Biking) returned 8 pm.
18th Left Fawley 10 am arrived Hamble 10.40 pm.
21st Left Hamble 9.30 am arrived Bournemouth 6.45 pm.
22nd Left Bournemouth 8 am arrived Bournemouth 8.45 pm.
23rd Left Bournemouth 8 am arrived Cowes 7.30 pm.
25th Left Cowes 1.30 pm arrived Hamble 4 pm.
26th Hamble.
27th Left Hamble and arrived Bournemouth and Cowes.
July 2nd Left Cowes cruising in Solent.
7th Arrived Cowes.
8th Left Cowes cruising in Solent.
10th Arrived Cowes.
12th Left Cowes 8 pm arrived Hamble and staying.
Aug 2nd Finished from Cowes.

Extracts from the Diary of Clifford William Willis

Over the many years I spent delving into family genealogy, I came to understand that there comes a point when you've unearthed all the relevant information available on the usual family history websites. I would only rejoin again for a month or two, when something promising appeared.

It wasn't until the release of the 1921 census though, that the final piece of the puzzle fell into place and at long last, I found the answers I had been searching for about *Coral*. It should be noted that the census was taken on the night of the 19th of June 1921. Therefore, any information derived from this census should correspond with the same entry date on the diary page that Ken emailed me. What a lucky coincidence that was, belt and braces!

Searching the 1921 census for my family member, George Edward Cook, I scrolled down until I found him. With a quick click on the link, all the information I needed appeared instantly.

Information from the census

The census was recorded at Fowey Harbour, Cornwall, although it was mistakenly transcribed as 'Powery' on the census. This location matched with the diary entry for June 19th 1921, sent by Ken. The Vessel listed was a sailing yacht named *Coral*, identified by the number 124490. *Coral's* owner and employer was the same Mr. Francis T. Mew, who also owned I 111379.

Recorded persons on board *Coral*: 1921 census

Household Members Name	Age	Relationship	Birthplace
George Cook	60 Years 4 Months	Master Mariner	Poplar, Middlesex London
Richard Foley	41 Years 1 Month	Mate	Clovelley, Devon
Clifford W. Willis	31 Years 10 Months	Steward	Cowes, Isle of Wight
William Cook	32 Years 3 Months	AB (Seaman)	East Cowes, Isle of Wight
*Thomas P. Ryle	40 Years 8 Months	AB (Seaman)	Cowes, Isle of Wight
George Lamey	26 Years 6 Months	AB (Seaman)	Appledore, Devon
Harold J. Blanche	30 Years 11 Months	AB (Seaman)	Bucks Mill, Devon
Francis T. Mew	62 Years 8 Months	Owner	Newport, Isle of Wight
Miss Rita Mew	20 Years 8 Months	No Occupation	Newport, Isle of Wight

I believe there is a strong likelihood that the names above listed in the 1921 census correspond to the individuals shown in the photo taken aboard *Coral*, based on information in Ken's email.

* Thomas's surname on the census is indistinguishable and is transcribed as Ryle. After researching him, I believe his name was Thomas Paul KYLE born in 1879 at Cowes. His occupation was an Able-Bodied Seaman (ABS). Also listed in the crew is William COOK, George Edward COOK's son, my grandfather. He would later go on to serve for over 20 years as Steward aboard Captain C.W.P. SLADE's schooner, *Diane*.

Based on information from Ken's great grandfather's diary and the 1921 census transcript, it had become clear that there were two yachts named *Coral*. The first *Coral*, registered under number 111379, was already familiar to me. However, the second *Coral*, registration number 124490 was a mystery and would become the focus of my next research project. All available records confirm that my great grandfather, George Edward Cook, served as master on both yachts named *Coral*, each of which were owned by Mr. Francis Templeman Mew.

Banba 111 (Three) = Coral = Coral of Cowes

Now, with the knowledge that Francis T. Mew had owned both yachts and being in possession of the registered number of the mysterious vessel, I sat down at my computer eager to dig deeper. Opening a search engine I typed in 'Lloyd's Yacht Register.' Almost instantly, a page of promising links appeared. I clicked on the top result, which brought me to the Lloyds Register Foundation website.

Scrolling down the page that opened up, I found a collection of Register volumes, freely accessible and organised by year. Knowing that the vessel in question appeared on the 1921 census, I clicked on that year's volume, opening it up. I was amazed by how much detailed information was packed into these volumes. I located the section listing registered yachts, all names neatly arranged in alphabetical order

which made *Coral* easier to find. On page 139, there they were, both *Coral*s side by side!

Coral number 111379 that featured in my first article 'A Snippet in Time', once owned by Francis T. Mew, had now changed ownership and was now registered to James E.C. BOOLDS. Upon discovering this I decided to forget about this *Coral* and turn my full attention on the real mystery, the second yacht bearing the same name.

It was this vessel that would become the centre of my research, as mounting evidence began to suggest she was none other than the ill-fated *Coral of Cowes*, the million-pound classic yacht that tragically sank in the shallow waters of Souda Bay, Crete.

With my full attention now focused on the second *Coral*, the mystery surrounding her began to unfold. Registered under number 124490 and based in Cowes, she was built in 1902 by White Brothers of Southampton, to a design by the renowned architect Fred SHEPHERD. She had an identifying number 3 on her sail. *Banba 111* was her original name.

To uncover more about *Banba 111 / Coral*, particularly the year she was purchased by her second owner, Francis T. Mew, I turned to the Lloyds Registers, methodically working through each volume from 1902 to 1921 (below) looking for clues.

- 1902-3 first registered as *Banba 111* by her owner, J.J. McMAHON, home port, Cork.
- 1908-9 Change of name from *Banba 111* to *Coral*, page 750
- 1909-10 *Coral* now owned by her second owner, Francis Templeman Mew, page 750. Change of name *Banba 111* to *Coral*, Page 786.
It is very highly likely that Francis T. Mew renamed *Banba 111* to *Coral* following her purchase, continuing the name of his previous yacht. I believe this was a maritime tradition.
- 1921 As above

- 1922, *Coral* is still registered under the ownership of Francis T. Mew, although he would sadly pass away in February of that year.
- 1923, *Coral* was then purchased by Sir Hugh Henry John DRUMMOND as recorded on Page 149 of the Lloyds Register. Unfortunately, Sir Hugh's time with *Coral* was short lived as he also passed away in August 1924. During this period, my great grandfather continued to serve as master of *Coral* for a time, remaining until the vessel was eventually purchased by her next owner.
- 1925, recorded on Page 161 of the Register, *Coral* was purchased by Frank CHAPLIN. Her home port was listed as Cowes. Chaplin was the owner of *Coral* when she won the prestigious King's Cup twice, first in 1926 and again in 1928. In 1935, under his ownership, *Coral* claimed 1st place, winning the renowned Queen's cup. He continued to be listed as *Coral's* owner in the registers until the outbreak of World War 2 in 1939, when most yachting activities were suspended due to security concerns and the widespread salvaging of metal to support the war effort.
- In the 1946 Register, *Coral* appears under a section titled 'Alterations and Additions to the 1939 Register'. On page 46 there is an entry note that states that later in 1939 the ownership of *Coral* had transferred to C.P. SEROCOLD.
- The last recorded entry naming C.P. Serocold as the owner of *Coral* appeared in the 1947 Lloyd's Register. Following that entry the yacht vanished from the records for the next few years. It wasn't until 1954 that *Coral* resurfaced, this time under the ownership of Harold H.J. MARVIN, who remained listed as her owner through to the 1965 edition.

Having gathered a substantial amount of information from the registers, I felt confident that this vessel at a later date would be known as *Coral of Cowes*. I was so close to uncovering the full story. Unfortunately, my main source of information, the Lloyd's Register's, offered no trace of *Coral* in any volume available on line after 1960.

Frustrated and still without a clear answer as to who had changed *Coral's* name, for the third time. I reluctantly set the project aside in hope that as happened before, new information might one day surface.

That breakthrough finally came on June 8, 2012, in the pages of the *Isle of Wight County Press*. A striking headline and an article that would lead me to resolve that *Banba 111*, *Coral* and *Coral of Cowes* were indeed one and the same! The following is abridged from that article.

Grand old lady comes home

A £1 million classic yacht that once raced in The Solent and won the coveted King's Cup twice in 1926 and again in 1928, has returned to her former home port of Cowes after an absence of two decades. The 96ft gaff-rigged schooner¹, *Coral of Cowes*, built in 1902 in Southampton languished as a houseboat at Souter's Yard on the river Medina for five decades after she was stripped of her 26-ton keel, which was taken to be used in the making of bullets, for the war effort, in the early 1940s.

She was eventually bought by a man living in South Africa who spent thousands of pounds and 14 years restoring her before moving her to the Caribbean. She was then sold again to Richard OSWALD, 48, who spent thousands more pounds completing the restoration project before he decided to bring her back to her home port of Cowes.

Richard, who then lived in Winchester, said: 'For much of her life she belonged to members of the Royal Yacht Squadron. After her keel was taken away, she ended up as a houseboat. At that point she was just a hull and was painted green. When we arrived back here to Cowes, it was the first time *Coral* had sailed up the Solent since the Second World War.'

Richard explained, 'The important thing was returning her back to her home port.' He had purchased *Coral* in 2011 and after restoring her to a fine standard. He then renamed her *Coral of Cowes* and spent four

¹ Coral had been re-rigged as a gaff schooner, replacing her original yawl configuration.

years chartering her in the Mediterranean and the Caribbean before eventually selling her.

In 2016, this grand old lady of Cowes was acquired by her final skipper, Hugh Kerr Bradley ROBERTS a Scotsman and a former naval officer. In his last 12 years Roberts had made his home on the Greek island of Crete where he was understood to be known by his pals as 'Sir Hugh' despite never having a knighthood. He was regarded by the locals as an eccentric rich man who was always polite, a brilliant man who was devoted to his classic yacht. Hugh had been living alone with his faithful dog on board *Coral* since his partner had died from cancer approximately in 2012-13.



Coral of Cowes; Round the Island Race 2015

From Cowes to the deep: The fate of Cowes Coral

Coral of Cowes remained in Hugh's devoted hands for several years, anchored in the waters of Souda Bay. But on January 31st 2021, tragedy struck under mysterious circumstances when *Coral* suddenly began to sink in the shallow waters of the Bay. A local woman, who had seen the schooner in distress, had alerted the coast guard. In response, they enlisted a nearby fisherman to take them out to the scene of the badly listing and partially submerged vessel. Amid the wreckage they discovered the lifeless body of 74-year-old Hugh, face down in the water, with one hand eerily entangled in the rigging of his beloved vessel. His adored and loyal dog, Friar Tuck survived. He was found shivering and whimpering for his owner, clinging desperately to the wreckage.

Hugh's body was reported to have no visible injuries at the time of discovery. However, the authorities were puzzled by how a 30-metre

vessel like *Coral of Cowes* could have sunk so easily. They did not rule out the possibility of foul play. An autopsy was conducted but no public news reports have disclosed the cause of death or provided any definitive conclusions from the post mortem. If a coroner's report was released, it appears not to be available online.

Friar Tuck was taken to a local animal welfare society at Ghania. The owner stated that 'there have been calls from all around the world asking to take him in.'

Coral's former owner, Richard Oswald, on Facebook, shared his thoughts following the sad news of her loss:

'Five years ago, I handed *Coral* over to a new skipper. That skipper, a Scot, was Hugh Robert, a proper old gaffer. He showed up in Cowes just after the Royal Yacht Squadron's bicentennial regatta in 2015 wearing sandals and a pair of old cords, rolling his own cigarettes. Hugh was a connoisseur of all things beautiful and elegant and *Coral* was to be his swansong. Tonight, I will raise a glass of the best malt whiskey to Hugh and the incomparable *Coral of Cowes*.'

A haunting trace of *Coral of Cowes'* former beauty still lingers in Souda Bay where her masts rise solemnly from the water, a poignant reminder of all she once was and maybe could be again?

My journey into the maritime history of my great grandfather's yacht *Coral*, on which he had served, began without any idea of the twists it would take. As I traced her story through the Lloyd's Registers and builder's records, it became clear that there had been not one, but two yachts named *Coral*, both owned by Francis Templeman Mew. My great grandfather had beyond doubt, served as master of both.

The yacht known as *Coral of Cowes* is confirmed to be the same vessel originally launched in 1902 as *Banba 111*. Documentation and registry records firmly support this identification. Throughout her service life this vessel underwent changes in ownership and name, but retained the consistent Fred Shepherd design and original structural characteristic of the golden age of yachting.

Who really renamed Banba 111? The True Story of Coral

Francis Templeman Mew was a leading figure on the Isle of Wight, well known in both civic life and in the yachting community. He served as an Alderman and Mayor of Newport, as well as President of both the Newport Rowing Club and the Newport Golf Club. Deeply involved in local causes, he also supported several Island charities. He was the Chief Executive of W.B. Mew Langton & Co., the Newport brewers, a company that also owned more than a 120 Public Houses across the Island, businesses that provided livelihoods for many Islanders and, as I can happily admit, I've enjoyed a good time in many of them!

So in view of the above, Francis Templeman Mew deserves proper recognition as the owner who renamed *Banba 111* to *Coral*. It is frustrating to see so many websites and yachting publications continue to credit Sir Hugh Drummond, her later owner, with this act. The historic records together with my own family's connection make it clear this is not the case. It is time the story was corrected and the true history of *Coral* (of Cowes) acknowledged.

David RUSSELL (IWFHS Member 2848)

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Acknowledgements and references:

- Ken White: diary and crew photo
- Chalto: photo of *Coral of Cowes*
- Ancestry.co.uk
- <https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/13910664/brit-aristocrat-found-dead-sunken-yacht-crete/>
- <https://hec.lrfoundation.org.uk/archive-library/lloyds-register-of-yachts-online>
- <https://www.sandemanyachtcompany.co.uk/yacht/164/fred-shepherd-80-ft-gaff-schooner-1902>
- https://youtu.be/SNYKKb8pUR8?si=5Kb_3weaE6iDwPFg

Appuldurcombe House and What the Papers Said - Part 5

The *Hampshire Advertiser*, dated December 1859, published the application notice for shares in ISLE OF WIGHT (APPULDURCOMBE PARK) HOTEL COMPANY LIMITED with its list of Directors, Bankers, Secretary and Brokers:

DECEMBER 12TH, 1859. HANTS Ad - 51 Dec 1859

ISLE OF WIGHT (APPULDURCOMBE PARK) HOTEL COMPANY, LIMITED.
CAPITAL £15,000 in 15,000 Shares of £1 each.
 10s. per Share to be paid on application, and the remainder on allotment. Registered under the Joint Stock Companies' Limited Liability Act, whereby the responsibility of each Shareholder is limited to the amount of his subscription for Shares.

DIRECTORS.
 Joseph Procter, Esq., 5, Finchley New-road, St. John's-wood.
 James Benj. Dunn, Esq., 18, New-street, Spring-gardens.
 Joseph Fisher, Esq., 10, Clifton-gardens, Maida-vale.
 George Joyce, Esq., Newport, Isle of Wight.
 Robert Kenyon, Esq., Belgrave House, Camden-road.
 George Tate, Esq., 65, Camden-road Villas.

AUDITOR.
 James Anderton, Esq., 20, New Bridge-street, Blackfriars.

BANKERS.
 The London and County Bank, Lombard-street, London.
 The Hampshire Banking Company, Newport, Isle of Wight.

SECRETARY.
 Mr. Septimus Joyce, Newport, Isle of Wight.

BROKERS.
 Messrs. Smith and Binney, 5, Angel-court, Throgmorton-street.

Offices of the Company, Newport, Isle of Wight.
 This Company has been formed for the purpose of converting the celebrated property, known as "Appuldurcombe Mansion," near Ventnor, late the property and marine residence of the Earl of Yarborough, and containing nearly 100 rooms, into a first-class Hotel, which will be ready for occupation within two months.

Application for shares, addressed to the directors, must be sent to the Secretary, Mr. Septimus Joyce, at Newport, Isle of Wight; or to Messrs. Smith and Binney, No. 5, Angel-court, Throgmorton-street, E.C., the Brokers to the Company, of whom detailed prospectuses with forms of application may be obtained: but no application will be attended to, unless a deposit of Ten Shillings for each share applied for shall have been previously made with the Bankers of the Company.

The *Hampshire Advertiser*, dated August 1859, reported:

‘APPULDURCOMBE – It is currently reported that this mansion, lately the seat of Lord Yarborough, has been purchased by a London company, for the purpose of being converted into a hotel. It is also supposed that the already massive pile of buildings will be greatly enlarged, thereby rendering it one of the most eligible and commodious hotels in the south of England.’

And the *Hampshire Independent*, dated October 1859, then reported:

‘GOING AHEAD. – We are informed that Appuldurcombe House, with its beautiful gardens, and a considerable number of acres of park land, has been either sold or leased to a company of shareholders, who are about to speculate upon the advantage of turning it into a spacious hotel, for the accommodation of the numerous visitors to the Island, as it is expected that the contemplated railroad from Newport to Ventnor, will run in close contiguity to this charming spot, if not actually through the estate.’

The *Hampshire Telegraph*, dated March 1860, reported the death of

‘GIBB – On the 15th inst., at Easter Softlaw, Kelso, aged 82, Mr James Gibb, many years head gardener to the late Earl of Yarborough, at Appuldurcombe, and late of New Village, Isle of Wight.’

The *Isle of Wight Observer*, dated June 1860 – reported

‘On Monday the new coaches belonging to the Appuldurcombe Hotel Company started from Ventnor – one at 7.15, through Appuldurcombe Park to Newport and Cowes, returning from Cowes on the arrival of the first London-train passengers at 12.15. The other coach started at 9.30 to Appuldurcombe, driven by Robinson, by Whiteley Bank, through Lake and Sandown to Ryde, returning at 3.30 by the same route, which is a much easier road, avoiding the hills between Shanklin and Bonchurch. The coaches are splendidly horsed, and when there are more visitors in the Island they will

undoubtedly have their share of the public patronage. The gas works and the other arrangements of the Hotel are nearly complete, and it is expected to be opened in a few days.'

The *London Daily News*, dated July 1860, reported the good news that

'Isle of Wight Hotel Company (Limited) – Appuldurcombe Park. This HOTEL is NOW OPEN for the reception of visitors. The tariff will be supplied on application to the Manager. The Company's conveyances will leave Ryde for the Hotel daily at 3.30 pm, and Cowes at 12 noon. Other conveyances to and from Cowes, Ventnor, &c., pass near the Hotel, and may be hired at the several places – By order. J. ATKINSON, Manager.'

The *London Standard*, also dated July 1860, had the following advertisement:

'THE ISLE OF WIGHT HOTEL,
Appuldurcombe Park,
Near Sandown Bay, Shanklin, and Ventnor.

Terms.- A bedroom, with the use of general drawing and dining rooms (elegantly furnished), including board and attendance, as follows:-'

THE ISLE of WIGHT HOTEL,	
Appuldurcombe Park, Near Sandown Bay, Shanklin, and Ventnor.	
Terms.—A bed-room, with the use of general drawing and dining rooms (elegantly furnished), including board and attendance, as follows:—	
Ladies, per week	2½ guineas each.
Gentlemen ".....	3
Charges per day and for suites of rooms for families "equally" mode- rate.	
The Company's omnibus, the Griffin, leaves Ryde Pier for the Hotel daily at 3.30, and the Yarmouth leaves Cowes for the Hotel at 12.30 daily. Fares moderate.	
JAS. ATKINSON, Manager.	

The 1861 Census was taken on the 7th April 1861 and the following were resident at the Appuldurcombe Hotel:

James ATKINSON	Head	54	1807	Hotel Manager
Elizabeth ATKINSON	Wife	46	1815	
Marian ATKINSON	Dau	23	1838	Assistant Book Keeper
Elizabeth ATKINSON	Dau	15	1846	Scholar
Ada C. ATKINSON	Dau	13	1848	Scholar
Wheatley J. ATKINSON	Son	11	1850	Scholar
William CREETH	Waiter	28	1833	Hotel Waiter
Elizabeth MOSES	Servant	25	1836	Chamber Maid
Mary YOUNG	Servant	33	1828	Hotel Cook
George MORRIS		51	1810	Bailiff

However, by June 1861 cracks were beginning to show in the Hotel Company. The *Hants Advertiser* dated the 22nd June 1861 reported the following:

‘The Defunct Appuldurcombe Joint Stock Hotel Company – the assistant overseer of Godshill complained against this company for non-payment of poor rates, amounting to £10 10s 2d. Mr Holloway, the surveyor of highways for the same parish, made a similar complaint against the company for the recovery of £6 7s 4d, the amount of a highway rate. Mr Hearn said, a bill of sale having been given, the rate people were common creditors. There was nothing to seize. He thought it would be useless to proceed. The service of summonses having been proved, the case was adjourned till this day (Saturday), in order that the parish officers might have an opportunity to reconsider the matter.’

The *Hants Advertiser* dated 29th June 1861 reported

‘The Defunct Appuldurcombe Joint Stock Hotel Company – This was an adjourned case, where the party came up for a decision on a poor rate standing against the company for £10 10s 2d.

Mr James Griffin, assistant overseer of the parish of Godshell, produced the book of the rate passed by the bench on the 20th of April, in which Appuldurcombe house stood rated at £225; the copse and plantation, £6; Span Lodge, £4; gasworks, £2; and part of Appuldurcombe Park, at £42 15s.

The property was rated at 9d in the pound, and the company was in possession when the rate was made. Witness had repeatedly asked for Mr Atkinson, the manager at the house, and demanded of him the rate, as he had paid him the previous ones. The reply was that he had no money, and expected the present proprietor would pay. Mr Lea had paid him some Queen’s taxes, and had written to witness offering to pay part of the poor rate. Judgement was given for the amount, but the bench declined offering any advice as to further proceedings.’

The non-payment of rates must have been sorted as the *Morning Post* in July 1861 reported the following advert:

‘THE ISLE OF WIGHT HOTEL,
Appuldurcombe Park, Isle of Wight –
This beautiful Hotel, which stands in Appuldurcombe Park, is NOW
OPEN for the RECEPTION OF VISITORS, at extremely moderate
charges.
Conveyances can be had at Ryde to the hotel at all hours – All
immediately attended to.’

Lesley ABRAHAM (IWFHS Member 540)

lesley@kitehillfarm.co.uk

Sources: British Newspaper Archives, Findmypast.

What Happened to Uncle BUCK?

I am searching for my Great Uncle Alfred BUCK whose disappearance will, I suspect, be based on his back story and that of his family. I have decided to try and work this from Alfred's position and spread out to the rest of the family. Alfred was born in Ventnor on 31st October 1875, the last of 9 children to a mother Elizabeth Charlotte BUCK (née BUSH) who was 40 at the time. Sadly 3 of the children had died in infancy. Their father William Henry Newnham BUCK was a 3rd generation tailor with a shop in the High Street, Ventnor although a residency in Spring Street is mentioned.

I would be very interested to discover what then caused an apparent rift that wrenched young Alfred from his happy home by the 1881 Census which showed his father in Birkenhead as a Lodger and Commercial Agent. This may just have been on Census Day of course, however Elizabeth and three of the children were living in Southampton where she was running a lodging house. It would appear Elizabeth died just three months after that Census leaving the remaining three children homeless unless they were living with their father. He died two years later in 1883 back in Ventnor. I have been unable to discover what happened to daughters Elizabeth and Florence Eugenia Louise.

The Homeless Orphan

Although it probably isn't that unusual for the amateur genealogist to lose track of someone in their searching, I have lost three from the same family! Whilst important for my story to find his sisters too, Great Uncle Alfred Buck's story is an intriguing one. In essence, as a homeless orphan, he was enrolled in a school in Hertfordshire where he may or may not have been happy. I have been unable to find out much about Theobald's College. It is now a hotel and was a school in the 1960's but there is no information about it from the 1880s or 90s. It would seem to be an exclusive school (as many staff as pupils) but could it be a Dotheboys Hall? Whatever the case, he left at 16 and signed up to the Royal Navy for 12 years.

The Shooting in the Woodshed

At first, I saw an impressive naval record until I found a criminal record for the following year that had him in Winchester Gaol for two months for attempted suicide. IWFHS were able to supply me with newspaper articles that elaborated on the sorry tale. His naval career was so short (four months) that his record had been used for a continuation sheet for another man whose record was much more successful!

Whilst staying with his brother he was found in the woodshed having attempted to shoot himself. Surviving this, he had as a result lost the sight of one eye and was reported to have said 'I didn't do it only to get out of the Navy but I did it too for revenge on my people'. His brother William Dalton BUCK was in court and said neither he nor his sister would be willing to offer him a home in case he tried it again. And so he disappeared and I have no idea if he later succeeded in ending it all or if he was somehow saved and lived a happy life. I am hoping someone can help me here and so I am setting out the history of the family leading up to all this. Obviously searching for clues as we go!

A SAILOR BOY'S ATTEMPTED SUICIDE.—Alfred BUCK, 16, described as a sailor boy, pleaded guilty to having, on January 12th, attempted to commit suicide by shooting himself in the head with a revolver at Millbrook.—Mr. Tickell was retained for the prosecution, and Mr. Bullen held a watching brief on behalf of the prisoner's relatives.—His Lordship asked if any of the boy's relatives were present, and a brother—by profession an artist—was placed in the box. In reply to the learned Judge, he hesitated about undertaking to look after the lad in the event of his conditional release. He felt sure, too, that the prisoner's sister would not undertake this either, lest he should repeat the attempt upon his life.—Mr. Bullen was engaged in the other Court, but Mr. C. Lamport, of Southampton, the solicitor instructing him, said he understood the relatives would not take it upon themselves to look after the prisoner, but wished him to be placed under restraint, believing that he was not answerable for his acts. Letters which he had written contained evidence of his suicidal intentions.—His Lordship elicited from the prison authorities that the accused had been under supervision while in gaol, and he was judged to be sane.—The prisoner was ordered to be put back, his Lordship remarking that if any responsible person would undertake to look after him for awhile he might release the lad on that person's recognisances to bring him up for judgment when called upon.

Hampshire Telegraph 2nd April 1892

The Lineage

Alfred's father William Henry Newnham BUCK was born to Eliza NEWNHAM and appears as William NEWNHAM in the 1841 Census as grandson to the Head, James NEWNHAM. However, by the next Census he is listed as the eldest son of William H BUCK, a tailor in the High Street Ventnor and his wife Eliza Newnham. One person from the IWFHS has told me it was generally known that he was the natural father and he clearly brought William junior up to follow his profession.

The BUCKs hailed from Essex and do not need to concern us! His mother however, Elizabeth Charlotte BUSH, traces back through Island families from BUSH to DALTON to MOUNCHER to DALIMORE to GLEED and on up to Thomas LOVE (1641 – 1689).

Elizabeth's mother, Medina DALTON (1802 - 1875) is particularly worth a mention as she was clearly well-thought-of as Alfred's elder brother William had the middle name Dalton and his sister Laura had the middle name Medina. Her first five children were born on the Island but then the next two, including Elizabeth, were born in Portsmouth but I don't know why as the next two were born back on the Island and I can find no record of their having moved.

When her husband Peter BUSH died, she moved out of the pub he ran (possibly the Prince of Wales in Newport) first to live with her three youngest children in Newport but then to live with William and Elizabeth in Ventnor. (Census 1861 and 1871). She died in Portsmouth (probably at the Royal Hospital, Commercial Road) in 1875 the year her grandson Alfred was born.

The Siblings

Fourteen years before appearing at Alfred's trial, eldest brother (by 17 years) William Dalton BUCK had enjoyed his own spell of three months with hard labour in Winchester Gaol having been caught stealing a pocket watch worth £3. The theft from a man in Ryde took place in January 1878, eight days before he married Augusta Emma JESSE, from Ryde. His trial was in March 1878 and their first son was born that June. One wonders if he was released in time for the happy event! By the 1881 Census they had moved to Southampton and had two children. By 1891 they had three more children and in 1901 presumably living in a bigger house, William was described on the census form as a Decorative Artist. He certainly had quite a house-full to even think about offering a home to his nephew Alfred!

- His eldest son, also William Dalton BUCK was still at home at the age of 22 and listed as a plumber. He was the only one to remain in the UK when his father emigrated to Canada in 1911 followed by all the rest of the family.

William Snr joined the 103rd Calgary Rifles at the outbreak of WW1

but due to his age Sergeant Buck was assigned to be a guard at a prison camp in the Rockies. He wrote a book about his experiences in this tented camp. Although some of his children stayed in Canada, he and Augusta returned to the UK in July 1922 and William died two months later in Southampton General Hospital. Augusta then returned to Canada the next year presumably to be with the rest of the family.

Her son William BUCK remained in England, ran a cinema and became the Mayor of Southampton in 1933.

- Elizabeth BUCK was born in 1861 and appears with the family in the Census of 1871 in Ventnor and in 1881 with her mother in Southampton and then disappears by the next one.
- Laura Medina BUCK was born in Ventnor in July 1862 with the family still there together in 1871 when Florence BUCK was born. By the 1881 Census she was a servant to a Polish language master and his family in Peckham, London however by the 1891 Census she was married to a Tea Merchant, Alfred TWEED (His mother's maiden name was TWINING) and they had a daughter Ellen Irene Rosalind TWEED who had a governess. They lived in Chelmsford and there were three other servants. This spectacular step up was jeopardised by Laura committing adultery and Alfred divorced her in 1906. By the 1911 Census, however, Laura had married stock broker William H GOLDSMITH (appears originally to have been Goldsmid but presumably changed his name) and was living in Reading. Ellen was with them but eventually married into the Twining family.
- Alice Alexander BUCK was born in Ventnor in 1863. She also went into service to a French watchmaker in Southsea. She met and married a dockyard carpenter Charles Frederick Henry LOVE in January 1884 and they had four sons together, one of whom, Charles William Cecil LOVE was my grandfather. They lived in Portsmouth where sadly, Alice died at or after the birth of the fourth son in 1890 at the age of 27.
- Francis BUCK (1864-5) like his younger sisters Chloe (1868-9) and Rose Alma (1869-70) died in infancy on the Island.
- Ada Mary BUCK, born in Ventnor in 1867 died unmarried at the age of 20 in London and may have gone there to be in service like her older sister.

- Florence Eugenia Louise BUCK was born in 1870 and was first recorded in the 1871 Census and again in 1881 with her mother in Southampton. I can find someone with that name and a father called William Henry Buck being at a boarding school in Gloucester but the date of birth does not marry up so she effectively disappears too!
- Alfred BUCK was born five years later when his mother was 40.

The Questions

1. What happened to split the family up and were the parents estranged?
2. Why did Medina Dalton (Alfred's Grandmother) die in Portsmouth?
3. Did the remaining three children live with their father for two years before he died?
4. Under what circumstances was Alfred dispatched to Theobald's College and what sort of establishment was it?
5. Who paid his school fees?
6. What happened to him after his trial and his brother and sister (only one sister is referred to and we know Alice and Ada have died) refused to have him live with them?

I am hoping someone involved in the IWFHS can throw some light on what happened to this one-eyed man from Ventnor even though I suspect his future was not based on the Island.

Mo LOVE (IWFHS Member 7101)

m.love111@btinternet.com

Deaths

We have sent a message of condolence to Kay Arnold who notified us that her husband John ARNOLD (IWFHS Member 2527) has passed away. Kay added that John was a wonderful man and that they had been married for 58 years.

We have also sent a message of condolence to Anita ROE who notified us that her husband Ronald ROE (IWFHS Member 662) has passed away.

Some Useful Addresses

Isle of Wight County Record Office (closed on Tuesdays and weekends)
26 Hillside, Newport, Isle of Wight PO30 2EB

record.office@iow.gov.uk

<https://www.iow.gov.uk/births-deaths-and-ceremonies/family-history/>

Isle of Wight Register Office

Seaclose Offices, Fairlee Road, Newport, Isle of Wight PO30 2QS

registrars@iow.gov.uk

<https://www.iow.gov.uk/births-deaths-and-ceremonies/>

Bembridge

<https://www.bembridgeheritage.org.uk>

Brading

<https://www.bradingcommunityarchive.com>

East Cowes

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

Freshwater and Totland

<http://www.fatag.co.uk>

Newport and Carisbrooke Cemeteries

<https://foncc.org.uk>

Northwood Cemetery

www.friendsofnorthwoodcemetery.org.uk

Isle of Wight History Centre

<https://www.iwhistory.org.uk>

Ryde

<https://www.rshg.org.uk>

Shalfleet

<http://www.sources.shalfleet.net>

Ventnor

<https://ventnorheritage.org.uk>

Family History Federation

<https://www.familyhistoryfederation.com>

The National Archives

<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk>

The Minster - ODC 2025

A huge thank you to all who attended the Minster for the Society's 40th Anniversary One Day Conference (ODC). It was great to see old and new faces who came along to join us in celebrating the 40 years that we have existed.

We had three speakers on the subject of pubs on the Isle of Wight; many and varied establishments were covered; from the back of the island where the smugglers drank, to the fine hotels in Ryde and Newport. This is an ongoing project which is still being added to by our volunteers.

Our last speaker of the day was Dr Janet Few who talked about the society that she joined at the very beginning of its existence with a few like-minded friends and what it has become today with our Island, mainland and world-wide members.



A big thank you to all who filled in the questionnaire asking for hints and tips about the venue and also about the website, what you would like us to do for the year ahead and future projects that we as a society could look into.

Again, from all on the committee, a huge thank you. It makes all the work that we do for you worthwhile.

Hazel PULLEN (IWFHS Member 2650)

Librarian

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www.isle-of-wight-fhs.co.uk

