



# Can we blow away maritime's carbon crisis?

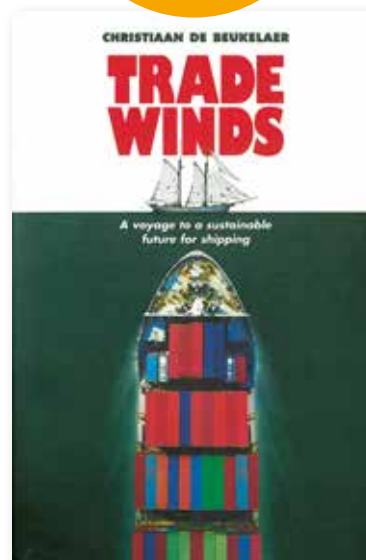
**W**ith maritime decarbonisation well and truly on the agenda, there has been a recent surge of interest in wind propulsion for cargo vessels. Christiaan De Beukelaer is a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society whose sailing hobby led him to explore the possibilities of using this old-fashioned method in modern supply chains, and he has written this fascinating account of what it is like to put wind power into practice.

Like our featured book in the previous issue of the Telegraph, **Trade Winds** focuses on a voyage that was unexpectedly disrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic. De Beukelaer joined *Avontuur*, the world's largest sailing cargo vessel, in the Canary Islands for a voyage to pick up rum, coffee and cacao in the Caribbean and transport them to Germany. He was hoping to spend three weeks finding out more about the movement to bring back emission-free propulsion. Instead he found himself trapped onboard for five months.

This adds an element of tension and adventure to an account of how entrepreneurs and sailing enthusiasts are attempting to make a difference for the planet by transporting goods the traditional way, rather than

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relying on what De Beukelaer calls 'horrendously polluting, but frighteningly convenient, fossil fuels'.

The book is very well written, and it is interesting to read about the practical details of navigation, work and social life onboard such

an unusual vessel. There are also maps, illustrations and images of the vessel during its voyage.

Potential readers who wonder whether this will be a lecture on environmentalism can be reassured that it is a fair account. It's clear where De Beukelaer's heart lies – he shows that the well-meaning attempts to transport goods by wind ship can inspire hope that a different kind of global economy is possible. However, he is also honest in his scepticism about whether a large-scale transformation to this planet-friendly propulsion system is ultimately possible. He doesn't shrink from the challenges involved, from the amount of timber required to build sailing vessels to the need for maritime professionals with particular specialist skills.

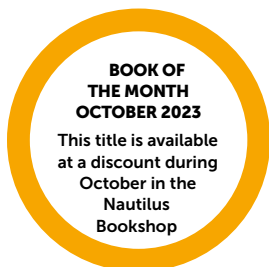
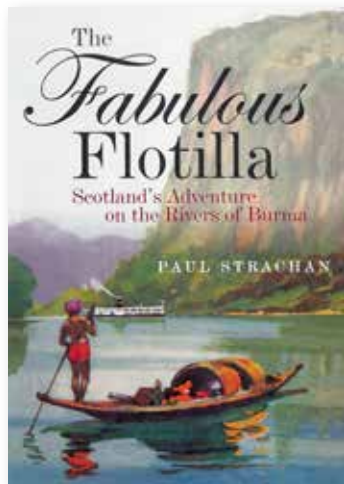
Still, the advocates for wind technology aren't going to give up. Only time will tell if they are successful in making a real difference to the maritime industry's carbon emissions.

**Trade Winds: a voyage to a sustainable future for shipping**

**By Christiaan De Beukelaer**

**Manchester University Press, £20.00**

**ISBN: 978 15261 63097**



## The glamorous maritime machinery of empire

This book covers the history of what was once the largest privately-owned fleet of ships in the world – a business that might have been an adventure for Scottish shipping entrepreneurs in Burma, but which is remembered less fondly in modern-day Myanmar due to its British colonial connections.

The first half of the book deals with the evolution of The Irrawaddy Flotilla Company (IFC), a Scottish-owned passenger and cargo ferry company which operated services on the tricky waters of the Irrawaddy River in Burma from 1865 to 1948, when the company was nationalised in the newly independent country.

IFC was an entirely Scottish enterprise, with nearly all its investors, management and ship's officers drawn from Scotland. Over 1,200 mainly Scottish-built ships carried the population of Burma on the country's river network, as well as attracting tourists, royalty and celebrities of the day. The flotilla began as a naval task force in the 1820s, was commandeered in five wars, and was to end its life with the British evacuation of Burma in 1942.

The second half of the book takes shape as a memoir of the author's journeys in Burma exploring 1,000 miles upriver.

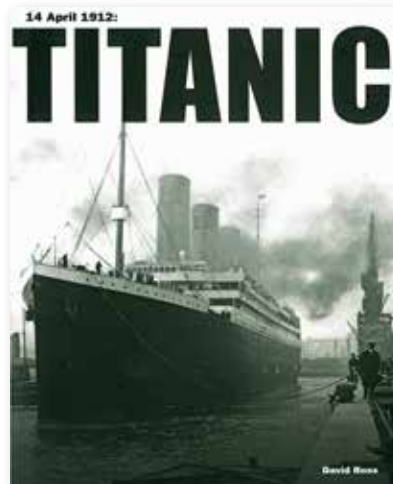
Liberally illustrated with photographs, maps and paintings, **The Fabulous Flotilla** may be problematic in some ways, but from a river cruise perspective provides a fascinating account of how paddle steamers evolved over a hundred years into 'riverine versions of luxurious ocean liners'.

**The Fabulous Flotilla: Scotland's Adventure on the Rivers of Burma**

By Paul Strachan

Whittles Publishing, £18.99

ISBN: 978 18499 55324



## Familiar Titanic fare enhanced by fine images

It often seems surprising that new books are still being published every year about the Titanic disaster, which happened over 110 years ago and is already one of the best-documented events in modern history. But the vessel clearly exerts a powerful hold over the public imagination – as the recent Titan submersible accident demonstrated only too well.

However interested we may be in the Titanic, most of us are not prepared to put our lives in danger to catch a glimpse of the sunken ship, and a well-illustrated book provides a better option. This is certainly delivered in the new work from Amber Books, a publisher known for its high-quality presentation of images.

There are fine illustrations on almost every page of **14 April 1912: Titanic** – largely black and white photos, but also paintings, diagrams and reproductions of documents such as a lifeboat inventory. The book also makes use of exhibits from the various Titanic museums around the world, including recreations of cabins and the radio room, and there are images of the wreck in the final 'Aftermath' chapter.

The story told in the text will be nothing new to readers of other Titanic books, and it is rather cheeky that there is no bibliography listing the works that the author must have drawn on. However, picture credits are given, and clearly a great deal of care has gone into sourcing the images and optimising them for print. With its large format and glossy pages, the book would make a good – and safe – gift for an enthusiast.

**14 April 1912: Titanic**

By David Ross

Amber Books, £19.99

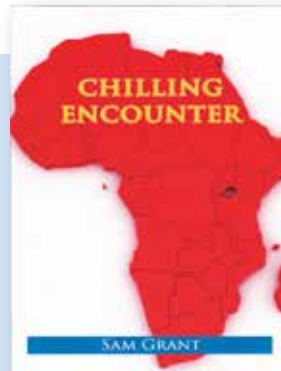
ISBN: 978 18388 62565



## Maritime thriller recalls the sixties at sea

Former seafarer Sam Grant has released the third in his series of maritime adventure novels set during the 1960s, in which Merchant Navy officer Mike Peters rises through the ranks while encountering everything from hijacking and international intrigue to rising stars The Beatles and Diana Ross.

This latest foray sees Mike serving as staff captain on a voyage from Liverpool to Lagos, with gold ingots onboard. The novel gives a good glimpse into life at sea and ashore at the time, while keeping things interesting with a plot that draws on contemporary politics and some deadly action too.



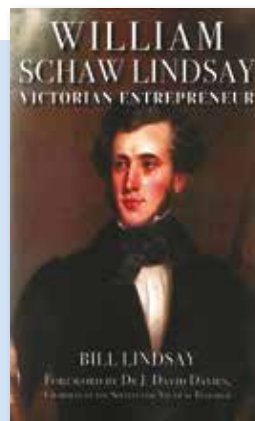
**Chilling Encounter**  
By Sam Grant  
Self published, £8.99 (available in the Nautilus bookshop)  
ISBN: 978 17822 26857

## Mercantile marine life in Victorian times

Here we have a biography produced with great heart by the subject's great-great-grandson William Stewart Lindsay – who believes, understandably, that his 19th century ancestor William Schaw Lindsay (1815-1877) should be better known in merchant shipping circles.

Drawing on extensive private journals, the story takes us through Schaw Lindsay's nine years at sea, his creation of a successful company with a fleet of 22 ships, and his time as a politician and author. Meetings with Queen Victoria, Napoleon III and Abraham Lincoln are charted, and there are candid pen-portraits of various UK prime ministers.

The hardback contains lots of useful appendices.



**William Schaw Lindsay: Victorian Entrepreneur**  
By Bill Lindsay  
Amberley Publishing, £25.00  
ISBN: 978 13981 15255

## Finding out about ferries

Although the company was founded in Sweden, Stena Line is a highly familiar name on ferries plying their trade around the UK, Ireland and the Netherlands. This new book is a kind of history of Stena Line in vessels, with hundreds of ship particulars listed alongside colour pictures and information about the fate of each ferry. Many are still in use, but others have been sent to the breakers' yard and at least one has sunk. The book is nicely presented and will be of interest to many members.



**Stena Line**  
By Ian Collard  
Amberley, £15.99  
ISBN: 978 13981 09483



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