

Tom Cunliffe

Tom Cunliffe is one of Britain's leading writers on sailing and the sea.

He was educated at a North of England grammar school and the University of Liverpool where he read law. In 1968, aged 21, he threw it all up for a career in sailing which he has pursued ever since, working on vessels of all sizes from dinghies to large gaff schooners.

Starting as an instructor in the South of France, he has served before the mast in small sailing ships, skippered yachts for private owners, raced offshore, been to sea as mate on a home-trade merchant vessel and taught sailing, seamanship and navigation at every level. He is an RYA/MCA Yachtmaster Instructor examiner, a Fellow of the Royal Institute of Navigation and has worked as a consultant for the governing body of sailing in the United States.

In his own yachts he has cruised to destinations as diverse as Brazil, Greenland, the Caribbean and Communist Russia. Specialising in vintage and classic craft, he has become a world authority on gaff rig.

In 1986, he began writing about his subject and is now the author of 25 published books. These are mainly of a maritime nature, from technical works on astro-navigation to a three-volume history of piloting under sail.

They include two 'Best Book of the Sea' award winners. He is editor of *The Shell Channel Pilot* and is a columnist for *Yachting Monthly*, *Yachting World* (UK), *Classic Boat* and *SAIL magazine* (USA).

Tom Cunliffe skippered his own Edwardian pilot cutter for BBC1's *Island Race* series, making 8 prime-time documentary programmes. He wrote and presented the BBC TV series *Boats that built Britain* as well as Quest Channel's popular series *Boatyard*.

When not at sea in his 44ft American built cutter, he lives with his wife in the New Forest where he rides a large motorcycle and cultivates roses.

