



ROYAL SYDNEY YACHT SQUADRON

Art Treasures of the Squadron

Gypsy Moth IV in the vicinity of Cape Horn

by John Allcot

Club main entrance



'The waves were tremendous. They varied each time, but all were like great sloping walls towering behind you. The kind I liked least were like a great bank of grey-green earth 50 feet or 15 metres high and very steep. Imagine yourself at the bottom of one. My cockpit was filled five times and once it took more than 15 minutes to drain. My wind machine stopped recording at 60kn. My self-steering could not cope with the buffeting. I had a feeling of helplessness.'

Sir Francis Chichester described to Time magazine the dramatic conditions when he passed Cape Horn on his single-handed voyage around the globe at age 65yrs in 1966/7 on Gypsy Moth IV 53 foot or 16 metre ketch.

The painting *Gypsy Moth IV in the Vicinity of Cape Horn* (39.5x48cm) on board by John Allcot is at the main entrance of the RSY on the left-hand side as you enter.

John Allcot, a British born marine artist (1888-1973) is the 'father' of Australian marine art. He trained as a deckhand in commercial shipping before becoming a full-time artist in Sydney. He was a



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Fellow of the Royal Art Society NSW.

In this painting he has captured the feel of these tremendous seas with the green-blue, huge ocean waves and the white water everywhere painted in oils in rough brush strokes. The movement of the sea is in contrast with the smooth, grey ominous skies. Allcot has added pink to the skies to add warmth to the painting despite the forbidding circumstances. The yacht is reefed down for the conditions and surfing down the mountainous waves, showing a sensitivity for the yacht in its environment. You can tell he had experienced these type of waters and had a feel for the ocean which makes him a great marine artist!

Sir Francis Chichester recalls with fondness in his book *Gypsy Moth IV Circles the World* his time in Sydney, in December 1966, when he was forced to call in to make a stopover 107 days into his journey. He set up his centre at the Royal Sydney Yacht Squadron and enlisted the help of America's Cup Designer Warrick Hood to add a piece to the keel for better directional stability. He was very grateful to the boatyard staff for giving up their Christmas holidays to work on his boat.

In July 2006, to express their gratitude, the UK Sailing Academy presented his original propeller and his very battered burgee from the Royal Yacht Squadron in Cowes. Both of these objects can be viewed above the painting. The original starboard winch was donated to the Squadron as part of a fundraiser for Chichester's journey. It has become a prized trophy for the Tuesday Ladies Twilight Series.



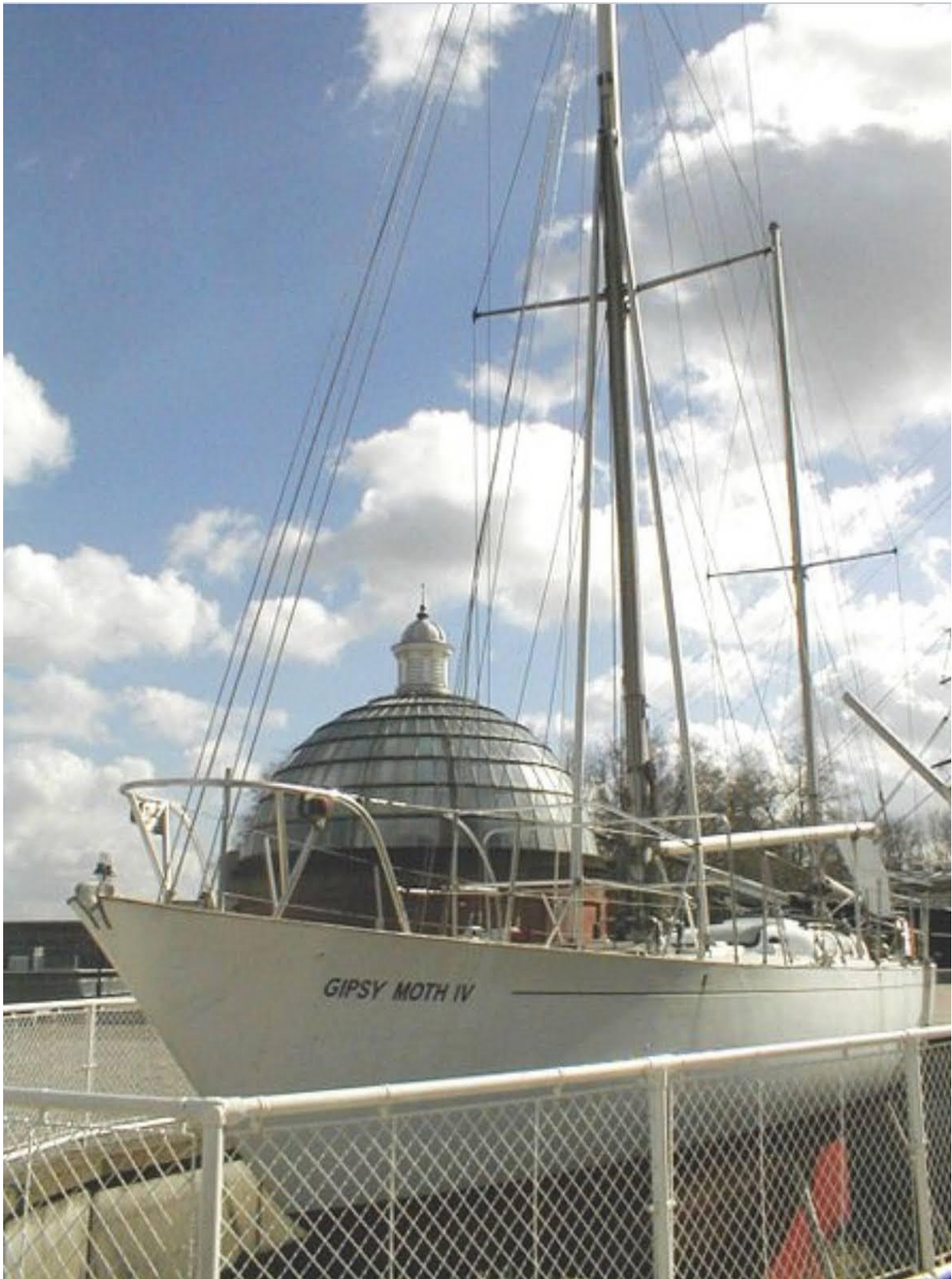
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After many years on public display in dry dock in Greenwich Gypsy Moth IV required restoration. She was relaunched in 2005 with public funds. Equipment and services were paid for by the British Marine Industry. A second around the world voyage from 2005-2007 with a mixture of experienced and disadvantaged youth on board was undertaken. She ran aground in the Pacific on a coral reef but made it home to celebrate Sir Francis Chichester's 40th anniversary of his original circumnavigation. She has passed into private ownership but was last seen at the Jersey Boat Show to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Chichester's circumnavigation in 2017.



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Gipsy Moth IV on display in Greenwich, England



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By Robyn Coleman Exhibiting Member of the Royal Art Society

Acknowledgments and Thanks

Gypsy Moth Circles the World by Francis Chichester

Photos

‘Gypsy Moth IV in the Vicinity of Cape Horn’ and Gypsy Moth IV Burgee and Propeller by Robyn Coleman

‘Gypsy Moth IV on display in Greenwich, England’ from Wikipedia in the public domain