



## Glossary of Terms

*(list will be updated on a continual basis)*

The words below are new to our Glossary of Terms. These words will be integrated into our overall list, which is below the new words.

**Chafing Gear** – pads, mats, ropes and other materials tied around pieces of rigging to protect them from rubbing on spars and other parts of the rig

**Foxes** – pieces of scrap line made by twisting together several strands or yarns

**Hand, Reef & Steer** – traditional qualifications of an able seaman, to hand is to take in or furl a sail and to reef is to shorten sail and to steer is to take a turn at the helm

**Helmsman** – the Sailor stationed at the ship's helm (wheel) in charge of steering and keeping a straight course

**Marline** – light, two-stranded line; often tarred and used for seizings

**Marlinespike** – a tapered metal spike used to separate strands of rope, untie knots and as a handle for hauling away on seizings, whippings, etc.

**Merchant Service** – the industry concerned with commercial shipping ventures (i.e., non-military)

**Rating** – denotes a Sailor's rank, responsibilities and rate of pay (i.e., able seaman, ordinary seaman, boy, etc.)

**Rigging** – the lines and ropes that hold the masts, spars and sails

**Sail Making** – the work of mending, replacing and sewing sails; the sail maker would often advise on how best to set and trim sails

**Seizing** – method of binding two ropes or objects together involving wrapping them tightly with line

**Splice** – weaving together to strands of separate ropes to form one longer rope

**Watches** – division of labor aboard ship; the ship's company is broken into several (usually three) watches, which take turns sailing the ship, standing by and resting

**West Indies** – the Caribbean, including the Greater Antilles, Lesser Antilles and the Lucayan Archipelagos

**Yards** – long spars affixed horizontally across the masts, which hold up the ship's square sails

**#tallshiptuesdays**



## Words from Previous Glossary of Terms

**Aft** – near the stern; toward the rear of the vessel

**Aft Cabin** – often called the captain’s cabin, a large cabin at the stern of the vessel

**Anchor** – the device by which, when dropped to the bottom, the vessel is held fast

**Binnacle** – a box near the helm containing the compass

**Boom** – a spar used to extend the foot of a fore-and-aft sail or studding sail

**Bow** – the front of the ship, the rounded part of a vessel forward

**Bowsprit** – a large and strong spar, standing from the bow of a vessel

**Deck prism** – a prism of glass fitted into the deck to allow light into the compartment below

**Fore** – toward the front of the vessel, used to distinguish the forward part of a vessel or things in that direction

**Guns** – armament with a naval carriage; the original *Providence* had 12 four-pound guns and 14 small rail guns

**Jibboom** – the boom rigged out beyond the bowsprit to which the tack of a jib is lashed

**Main deck** – the largest deck on a vessel

**Main hold** – cargo hold, also holds provisions, spare parts and sailors

**Mast** – a spar set upright from the deck to support rigging, yards and sails

**Port** – the left side of a vessel, looking forward, used in place of “larboard”

**Quarter Deck** – raised deck toward the stern where navigation and command of the vessel take place

**Shrouds** – a set of ropes reaching from the mastheads to the vessel’s sides to support the mast

**Spar** – the general term for all masts, yards, booms, gaffs, and other such timbers

**Starboard** – on the right side of the boat, looking forward

**Stern** – the aft end of a vessel

**Tiller** – a bar of wood or iron put into the head of the rudder, by which the rudder is moved to steer the vessel

**Windlass** – the machine used in merchant vessels to weigh the anchor