

still being put to good use

furniture, fixtures and fittings, also made their way ashore and into homes and outbuildings. Some still remain to this day.

Again according to records, a maritime hearing was held in Newcastle-on-Tyne in August 1940, with the captain and the second mate appearing.

In the captain's opinion, the collision occurred because of faulty manoeuvring on the part of the British ship, it having altered course in the fog on her own initiative without knowing *Tennessee's* course and position.

With regard to the

subsequent grounding, he blamed the fog, as well as "unusual and incalculable current" which must have taken her out of course.

Baron Fairlie proceeded to Sunderland after the collision. She was bombed and damaged near Algiers on August 15, 1943, but survived the war.

Sold in November, 1954, to Mintric Cia Ltd, she was renamed *Mintric*, before being seized by the Indonesian Government in 1959 and converted to a naval cadet training ship, renamed *Nanusa*.

Meanwhile, back at the

time of the *Tennessee's* grounding — and the subsequent jettisoning of her cargo — the people of Deerness made good use of wood and other items.

Teak, being a valued hardwood, has a multitude of uses in an island community, and was used for everything from clothes poles to fence posts, doors and door frames, and even staircases.

Over the years, the term "Tennessee teak" has become synonymous with Deerness, with Linsey remembering that, at school, woodwork teachers would recognise a Deerness pupil when they were asked to take in a piece of wood for a project — it was always teak.

Nowadays, Tennessee teak is being given a new lease of life by Deerness craftsman Stuart Wylie.

Using specialised computerised cutting equipment he built in his workshop, Stuart is using the wood for craft projects.

Stuart runs Orkney Crystal, engraving various pieces of glass for keepsakes and gifts.

He explained that, in the past, he has had trouble sourcing quality wooden trays for decanter sets, so

set about making his own.

He discovered that Tennessee teak was perfect for the job, and added an interesting back story to the items he was creating.

He said that, despite the wood being decades old, it has survived in remarkable condition. A thin skim off the surface of the faded wood reveals the beautiful grain of what Stuart believes is the finest Burmese teak.

When Danish oil is applied, the true beauty of the wood is revealed even more.

Stuart said that when the wood was used as a building material in houses back in the day, it was painted in many cases. However, these days, what he described as what would have been "a good find on the shore" is lightly treated, so that the beauty of the wood can shine through.

In the past, his late father, Freddy Wylie, crafted Orkney brides' cogs using a mixture of Tennessee teak and Orkney-sourced wood.

This shows that, despite the passage of time, generations of enterprising Orcadians can turn their hands to making use of the flotsam and jetsam that still appear, on our shores.



Above: Stuart Wylie, who is transforming teak from the *Tennessee*. The furniture behind him also came from the stricken ship.

Left: A bride's cog made by Stuart's late father, made from Orkney-sourced wood and Tennessee teak. (Craig Taylor)

