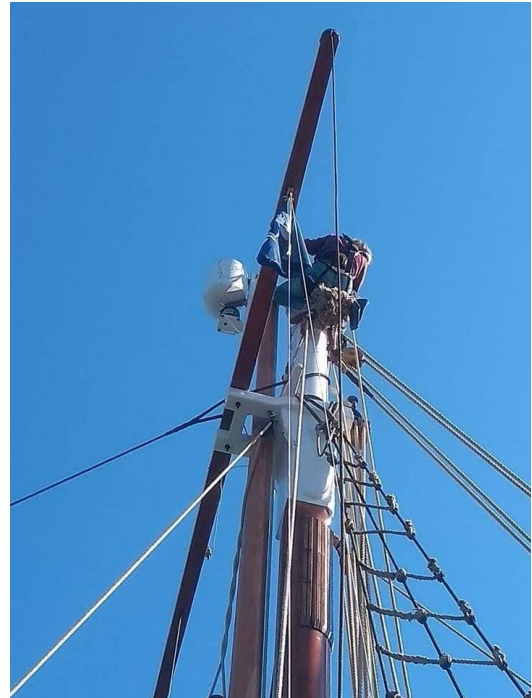


The first half of this month was spent frantically trying to get the last of the maintenance finished before coding, most importantly we still needed a mizzen boom and topmast. These arrived a couple of weeks before coding, and all the crew from all three boats helped us lift and maneuver them onboard which was made tricky as provi was rafted alongside Leader. We used the main throats of both boats and lots of elbow grease so that we had two perfect spars onboard... we just needed to install them. First of all we needed to prep and oil them hoping for good weather. We then needed to redrill the jaws of the mizzen boom with a huge drill bit that took a bit of searching for and paint the top and bottom of the top mast. After 6 layers of oil the spars were ready to be rigged and I had a very enjoyable morning up the mast rigging up the top mast. Best bit was hammering on the topmast cheese sitting on the main mast!



In the same afternoon I also did some rig blacking using a combination of tar, black paint and oil to protect the stays and shrouds from rust. We found that the best method to stop any drips on the deck was to put the rig mix in a water bottle and then use a sock with a sponge inside as a glove to black the rig, this worked well unless windy. The only downfall was that we were using a topping lift (lines that hold up the boom) to haul me up the rig... a topping lift with a huge baggy wrinkle on the end which happened to be at the same level as my face, and so as the rig got blacker, so did the wrinkle, so did my face :)

We also spent some time retensioning the rig now that the top mast was up. First of all we used tallow (animal fat) to grease the lines so that they run smoothly through the deadeyes. Then we used the main throat halyard to take the tension and to tighten up the shroud. We used a retensioning tool to get an even distribution of force through the deadeyes and also to get the shroud tight enough (this can also be achieved by hitting the shrouds with a big wooden hammer :)). We then used a Spanish windlass knot and a couple of seizing to hold the tension before easing on the throat halyard and tying a cow hitch onto the shroud, then

taking off the windlass. Repeat for all shrouds!

Needless to say I have had a crazy, busy and hugely enjoyable month, this is just a taster of day to day life at the moment.. Most days I feel like a sponge - absorbing!



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