THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE OCEANOGRAPHY SOCIETY

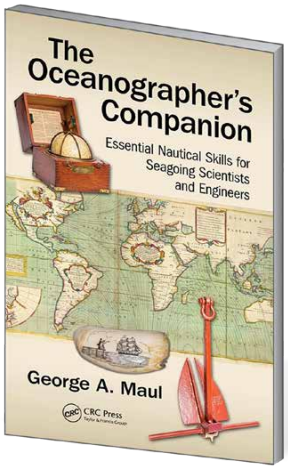
Oceanography

CITATION

Van Dover, C.L. 2017. Review of *The Oceanographer's Companion: Essential Nautical Skills for Seagoing Scientists and Engineers*, by G.A. Maul. *Oceanography* 30(3):128, https://doi.org/10.5670/oceanog.2017.306.

DOI

https://doi.org/10.5670/oceanog.2017.306



THE OCEANOGRAPHER'S COMPANION: ESSENTIAL NAUTICAL SKILLS FOR SEAGOING SCIENTISTS AND ENGINEERS

By George A. Maul, 2017, CRC Press, 190 pages, ISBN 978-1-498-77306-5, Hardcover: $119.95, ebook: $83,97

Reviewed by Cindy Lee Van Dover

Professor George Maul is a sailor-scientist who served in the commissioned officer corps of the US Coast and Geodetic Survey before becoming Supervisory Oceanographer with the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and then a professor at the Florida Institute of Technology. He brings to *The Oceanographer's Companion* a lifetime of experience in shipboard skills, and I felt honored to "meet" him through this book. The *Companion* is a readable guide that covers topics from shipboard safety and chain of command to basic hand signals and maneuvering boards. Who knew that the New Year's Eve "time ball" in New York City (or the "Crab-Pot Drop," as practiced in Morehead City, North Carolina) is a nod to shipboard timekeeping that relies on a ball drop from a tower in Portsmouth, England, to signal the time? Professor Maul tucks this and other wonderful tidbits of maritime legacy throughout the book. For the scientist or engineer about to head to sea for the first time, the *Companion* provides a good overview of what the experience will be like, including the organizational hierarchy of the ship's crew and ship terminology, with useful illustrations. Several chapters serve as convenient references for how to read international flags and pennants, how to calculate stability, displacement, true heading, celestial navigation, and what those Plimsoll marks mean. This book is not intended to give the reader a detailed knowledge of modern scientific and shipboard technologies and vehicles that are used in many types of oceanographic research today, but it does deliver oceanographic essentials, as promised. For the student anticipating his or her first experience on a research vessel, the *Companion* would be a welcome resource—a great bon voyage gift from parent, mentor, or friend, though the price would make me think twice about gifting this book. I would have devoured such a book during those anticipatory weeks leading up to my first-ever research cruise in the 1980s on R/V *Atlantis II*, and I would have carried it with me and referred to it in my stateroom once at sea or hunted it out in the ship's library. While I have always found members of ships' crews eager to share their professional knowledge, a read through the *Companion* would reinforce and complement the experiential learning. A copy of the *Companion* aboard every research vessel, a copy in every lab that sends students to sea, a copy in every oceanographic and marine lab library would all be usefully browsed by both novice and experienced scientists alike.

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ARTICLE CITATION

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