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The Nautical Sextant

THE NAUTICAL SEXTANT



W.J. MORRIS

FOREWORD BY KEN GEBHART



Synopsis

The Nautical Sextant reveals in pictures, prose, and perspective the experience and knowledge gained by the author from years of acquiring, studying, and restoring sextants from earlier times and from around the world. This fascinating book owes much of its attraction to the expert description and photos of the mechanics of the sextants and their subassemblies. It is also the story of how different manufacturers, in different times and places, solved the same mechanical problems in different ways in order to perfect one of the most accurate mechanical devices ever produced by man. All of this is complemented by an historical overview to the current day, an overview which has never been published until now. The Nautical Sextant will be of particular value not only to navigators, but also to restorers, collectors, students of technology, curators, and sextant dealers. With its bibliography and extensive use of footnotes, this book will certainly become a classic in its field. Born in the UK and educated at Cambridge University, W.J. Morris has spent most of his working life practicing medicine in New Zealand. Since retiring, he has fully indulged his interest in sextants and other fine measuring instruments. Over the years he has written numerous articles for laymen on engineering workshop technology and has restored many aircraft and nautical sextants to working order.

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Customer Reviews

Every once in a while something comes along that grabs my attention to the point I am spell bound, so is the case with this outstanding book. I have long held an interest in celestial navigation, and appreciate the surveying and nautical instruments of years ago that were used in nautical navigation and field astronomy. Bill's book has provided a reference to lead me through another journey in my life, that of understanding the form and function of nautical sextants. His love of the instrument exudes from every page, and his expertise and knowledge about sextant restoration is captured in his well written and detailed text. I am so excited to have this nice book adorn the shelves of my little private library. Like sextants of old, Bill's book is a work of art. With Bill's book, and my newly purchased 1938 Husun sextant, I am bound to follow the stars. Robert A. Pearce, Ph.D.

Great book about Sextant anatomy, and repair. If you want to use your new sextant this probably isn't the book for you, but if you're like me and cant afford a new one and have to buy an older one off ebay, this book will help you get it back into perfect shape for use. The author is VERY kind about answering email questions as well which only adds to the value of this book. There aren't a lot of people left in the world who know how to repair a sextant so Bill is worth his weight in gold.

Excellent details on the construction and evolution of the modern sextant. Great photographs of the components and disassembly of the sextant components. However, this is not an instruction on how to use a nautical sextant, which I thought when I purchased this book.

I bought this book after having read Morris' other item about marine chronometers, which I found extremely appropriate for my understanding of those items' handling. In the case of the sextant, I expected more info about using it but the book is mainly devoted to the mechanism itself and its restoring. However it was useful and the author is very clear with the descriptions, not boring at all.

If you are a lover of the ocean, ships and the era of exploration and colonization of the New World with a bias on the history of technology, then this book is essential reading to understand the role of accurate navigation in that mix. The story of the nautical sextant through the eyes of one of the world's experts in the restoration of vintage precision instruments is interesting, informative and

entertaining.

Excellent book. Just repaired one of my sextants - easily; thanks to the clear descriptions.

Beautifully illustrated, wonderful detail and helpful notes and suggestions for repair and care. Great investment

Excellent book. Mr Morris is an expert on sextants.

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