

# Clocks and watches

## Pocket Compass & Sundial

An 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> Century pocket compass and sundial housed in a circular leather covered case.

The compass was owned by Mr Thomas White (1773-1859).



In 1803, Thomas White, an established shipbuilder from Broadstairs in Kent, relocated to Cowes, Isle of Wight. White acquired Nye's yard and eventually took over premises on both sides of the River Medina at West and East Cowes.



Over the following years, Thomas and his sons ran various shipyards both individually and in partnership. It was not until 1860 that all their yards were combined under the name 'J Samuel White'.

## 'The Leader' stopwatch

This stopwatch belonged to *Uffa Fox*. It is marked 'Benzie Cowes'. Benzie, known as the yachtsmen's jeweller, was established in 1862 by Mr. Simpson Benzie. He was the first to design a clock to strike the ship's bells\*.

IWCMS:1997.492



\*Ship's bells indicate the time on board by means of ringing a bell. Unlike clock bells, the strikes of the bell do not match the number of the hour. Instead, there are eight bells, one for each half-hour of a four-hour watch.

## Moeris Stopwatch

This Swiss-made 'Moeris' stopwatch also belonged to *Uffa Fox*.

IWCMS:1997.493

*Uffa Fox* (1898-1972) was born at East Cowes. When aged fourteen he became an apprentice with a local boat builder and at 21 he set up his own boat building business.

His first major success, as a designer, was with the "National 14" racing dinghy. In Cowes Week 1925 '*Ariel*', his first design, won every race in her class.

Uffa was the father of the planing dinghy. In 1927 he designed and built '*Avenger*'. With greatly increased speed she was far ahead of her time. During the war he conceived the idea of the first parachuted Airborne Lifeboat.



*Model of Avenger*

# Act of Parliament Clock



One of the oldest clocks in the Isle of Wight Heritage Service's collection is an Act of Parliament or tavern clock. They hung in public houses from the middle of the 18th century and apart from churches they were the main way for people to read the time.

In 1797 the Prime Minister *William Pitt* brought in an act of parliament to tax any clock that cost more than 5 shillings. Some people sold their clocks and clockmakers struggled to stay in business. People relied even more on the tavern clocks. The tax was very unpopular and was stopped after 9 months.

The clock was sold by Kleyser & Co of 69, Borough, High Street, London. The company are recorded as working Circa. 1828-1881, many years after the clock was made.

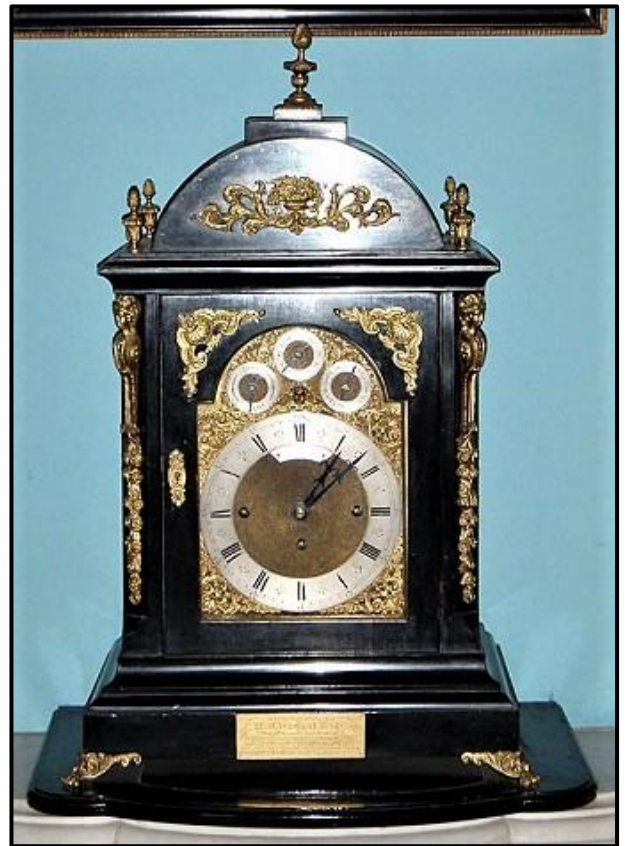


## Mantel clock

This is a black wood and gilt chiming mantel clock. The plaque reads 'Presented to H. J. Damant by fellow townsmen as a mark of esteem, on his retirement from the clerkship of the West Cowes Local Board after 43 years faithful service. Town Hall, West Cowes, March 1895'.

The clock was made by *J. Dimmick*. The face is inscribed 'Maker to H.M. The Queen. Cowes and Freshwater'.

IWCMS:1995.LG140



## Ormolu clock

An 18th century French eight-day ormolu clock with Sevres porcelain panelling.

'Ormolu' is the term used to describe gilt brass fitted on decorative art objects from the 18th and 19th centuries.

IWCMS:1995.LG6



*Detail*

# Power Station Clock

This clock was used at East Cowes Power Station, Circa. 1910.

The first public electricity supply on the Isle of Wight was provided by the Ventnor Electric Light and Power Company Ltd in 1899.

In 1928 a central power station was built at Kingston, East Cowes, by Isle of Wight Electric Light and Power Ltd, on the site of the Osborne Naval College engineering department.

IWCMS:2002.1789.1



## Wall clock

A wall clock from H. Abell of Ventnor.

Kelly's directory for 1898 records Abell Henry, watch maker, 80 High street, Ventnor. The directory for 1911 reads, Mrs Henry Abell, watch maker, 80 High street, Ventnor.

IWCMS : 2019.25