

Small Categories Series

Shipwheels

Aye, Maties! 'Tis the call of the sea we be hearin' with these covers! Still, I have no idea why Shipwheels are so popular with so many collectors, but I literally cannot keep them in my trading stock, and I can't come across new ones fast enough for my traders!

Perhaps it's not so much the shipwheel, itself, but rather the fact that the shipwheel is used so often as a logo. It's one of those special items that symbolizes the sea, sailing, ships, sea food, etc.—Man's challenge to Mother Nature that no obstacle, not even an ocean, shall bar his way.

I *did* try to research the history of the Shipwheel, but I was unable to find anything on the net. However, as far as I know, the Shipwheel was one of those inventions that was introduced at the beginning of the Renaissance that made ocean voyages possible. More specifically, it was one of the results of the Europeans inventing a hinged and axeled rudder, allowing the ship (i.e., the caravel) to handle much faster. Remember from books and movies how the ships of the Ancient World were steered by a helmsman who basically worked a giant oar coming off the back of the ship?—difficult, hard to handle, and slow to respond. The hinged and axeled rudder below, with the new round, spoked shipwheel on deck, now allowed the helmsman better control of the ship....sort of like the difference between manual and power steering, but more so!

I don't have stats on this category, but I know there are sizeable collections out there.

