

Re: Wind Directions?

West of Southwest is WSW, not NSW but it could be.

Assume a ship is heading SW.

If the cap'n says "Set the helm East South West", the helmsman needs to hear the instruction clearly, and we don't want him setting the rudder for North or East, the friggin' frigate will capsize. A cap'n will never say that and keep his license. Instead, the cap'n says "Set the helm West South West" (or "South South West"). If helm mishears and gets it wrong, then he either changes direction to South, West, South West (no change) or "West South" (never happen), maximum error from deafness or drunkenness 22.5 degrees.

If the course change is more than 45 degrees then someone has to run out the yardarm and reset the rigging.

The yardarms on a sailing ship are the horizontal timbers or spars mounted on the masts, from which the square sails are hung. At certain times of year it will seem from the deck that the sun has risen far enough up the sky that it is above the topmost yardarm. In summer in the north Atlantic, where the phrase "when the sun is over the yardarm" originated, this would have been at about 11am. This was by custom and rule the time of the first rum issue of the day to officers and men (the officers had their tots neat, the men's diluted, which is grog). Though the days of sail are far behind us, the expression has a surprisingly wide currency still, especially in North America. Despite its apparent antiquity, it wasn't recorded in print until the end of the nineteenth century. So the nomenclature is more to do with change of heading, not heading, and a hangover from the days of sail. Landlubber! :-)

My grandfather's ship:

<http://www.hms-arethusa.co.uk/>

When he served as an able seaman:

<http://www.hms-arethusa.co.uk/november42.html>

He survived the torpedo, not the cancer. Remembered with pride.
Androcles.

Ah, a seafaring family. Thanks. I would have never guessed.

Landlubber? Not me. I paddle a kayak. We use commands like, over there,

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look out, rapid ahead, right, left, duck, strainer, overhang, rock left,
giddyup, -- well, maybe not. :-)

Wayne T. Watson (Watson Adventures, Prop., Nevada City, CA)
(121.015 Deg. W, 39.262 Deg. N) GMT-8 hr std. time)
Obz Site: 39° 15' 7" N, 121° 2' 32" W, 2700 feet

"He who laughs, lasts." -- Mary Pettibone Poole

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Web Page: <home.earthlink.net/~mtnviews>