



Black John - the Bogus Pirate



Black John – the Bogus

By John Joyce

Avast shipmates! Black John the Bogus Pirate’s resident shipwright and part-time inventor ‘Smithy’ at your service!

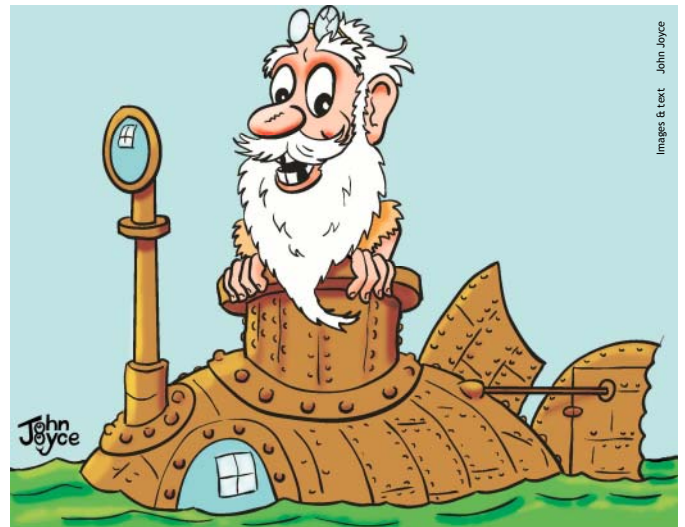
Science Fiction becomes Science

Jules Verne was a famous French novelist, poet and playwright who pioneered the genre of ‘science fiction’ back in the nineteenth century. Not only did he predict the launch of a spacecraft to the Moon from a launch site in Florida as far back as 1865, but he also imagined a fantastic submarine called the *Nautilus* in his 1869 novel *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*.

This fictional submarine of Jules Verne’s imagination, could run on electricity it generated itself and was capable of sailing beneath the polar ice cap, all the way to the North Pole.

Well, someone in the US Navy must have been a fan of Jules Verne because, on the 3rd August 1958, the first ever atomic submarine – the *USS Nautilus* – sailed all the way to the Arctic Circle and under the North Pole.

If you’re ever in Connecticut, USA you can drop in and see her at Groton where, as a floating museum, she attracts around a quarter of a million visitors each year.



Save the Environment . . . Car (and boat!) pool Your Way to Work!

One way to be kinder to the environment is to ‘car pool’ with other commuters to cut down on the use of fossil fuels and the emission of ‘Greenhouse Gases’ such as carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide. Carpooling also reduces the number of cars on the road – which reduces traffic congestions- and saves everybody money by reducing the cost of transport.

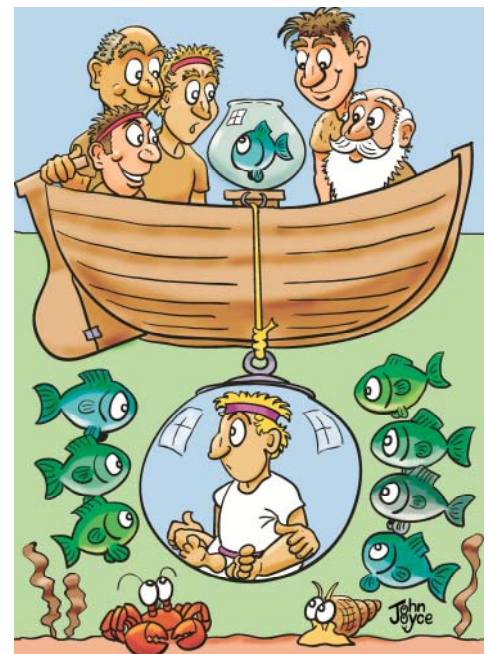
The idea has even spread to boats, where boat charter companies are becoming worried at its sudden popularity and the increase in unlicensed operators.

Alexander the Great Rules!

But the US Navy weren’t the first people to explore the underwater world. Not by a long shot! Over two thousand years ago, the legendary warrior Alexander the Great is reported to have been lowered into the Mediterranean Sea in ‘. . . a very fine barrel made entirely of white glass’.

On surfacing, Alexander is reported to have said that “the world is damned and lost. The large and powerful fish devour the small fry!”

Alexander was no stranger to underwater operations, having been interested in diving from the age of eleven and later ordering divers to destroy underwater defences to the city of Tyre.



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