

In the days before GPS satellites it was an occasion of note when a vessel passed "under the sun" when on passage. It occurs when the vessel's latitude and the sun's declination (latitude on the earth's surface) coincide. At noon that day the sun will be almost exactly overhead.

In this more modern age, the event is relatively unimportant and may not even be noted – a reflection perhaps of the many changes which have occurred in professional seafaring and the gradual separation of the passenger experience from the sea.

Under the Sun

We passed "under the sun" today.
It took no notice, intent on other things
- but we were there.

We passed "under the sun" today,
but nobody noticed
- didn't even care.

Satellites, computers worked together
and as one,
declared - "Oh yes, and by the way
we passed "under the sun!"

At noon the sun was blazing down EXACTLY overhead.
Latitude, declination matched and one old sailor said -
"We've passed under the sun - oh yes! - did anybody see?
or know? - or care? - or even look?
or was it only me?"

Equator close, the Cruise Director,
camping up and down,
said "Party Time! - King Neptune's here"
and minced off - like a clown!

The mariner smiled sadly
as his memories unfurled.
"We passed under the sun today
- into a different world".