MERCATOR

FLAG **BELGIUM**

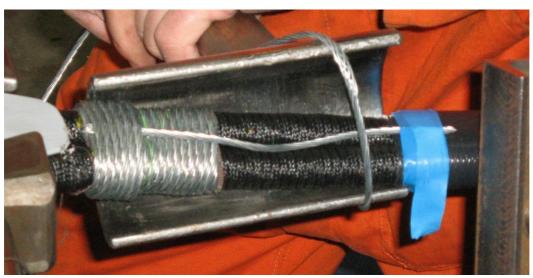| General characteristics	
Built :	Ramage&Ferguson Ltd. 1932
Former Names	
Owner	Belgium State
Tonnage:	778 BRT
Length:	Sparred Length: 78,40
Beam:	11,09 m
Height:	Max. Height: 41,00 m
Draft:	4,50 m
Sail plan:	15 sails Sail area: 1600 m2
Speed:	13 knots

Overhaul of rigging
winter 2008– 2009

- ♦ **Client** DAB Vloot Belgium Maritime directorat

- ♦ **Main Contractor for rigging** Mennens Amsterdam BV
  Finance, material purchase, logistics, personel

- ♦ **Subcontractor for rigging** Richard Tefsen Sailmaster
  Project Management, on site implementation, personel

- ♦ **Duration of project** Oktober 20th 2008 – May 4th 2009

- ♦ **Location** Industrie de Pecherie IdP Shipyard Oostende Belgium

Making new wire seizings

Project description:

- ♦ Dismanteling and removing from the ship of four yards, 2booms , 2 gaffs including sails and all running rigging

- ♦ Disasembly and removal from the ship of Fore lowermast, fore topmast and foretopgallant mast and mainlowermast, maintopmast and Mizzen lowermast and mizzen topmast and bowsprit

- ♦ Production of new standing rigging

- ♦ Installation and assembly of masts and spars with new standing rigging

- ♦ Installation of yards and spars with sails and running rigging.

Mercator

The barquentine *Mercator* lies at anchor in Oostende, Belgium. She was named after Gerardus Mercator (1512-1594), Flemish cartographer. She was designed by the Antarctic explorer Adrien de Gerlache (1866-1934) as a training ship for the Belgian merchant fleet. She was built in Leith, Scotland[2] and launched in 1932.

Besides being a training a ship, she was also used, mainly before World War II, for scientific observations, or as ambassador for Belgium on world fairs and in sailing events. She participated in several races, winning the 1960 Oslo-Oostende tall ships race. She brought back two Moai (giant statues) from Easter Island. In 1936 she brought home from Molokai, Hawaii, the remains of Father Damien. During World War II she was commissioned into the Royal Navy as **HMS Mercator**. Based in Freetown, Sierra Leone, she was the support ship for submarine forces in the area.

Her last trip was to Lisbon for the commemoration of the quincentenary of the death of *infante* Henry the Navigator.

In 1961 she became a floating museum, first in Antwerp, and finally from 1964 in the marina of Oostende, just in front of the city hall.
During all this time, she has become perhaps the best-known ship of Belgium.