



# DOCKYARDS

## The Naval Dockyards Society

*Exploring the civil branches of navies and their material culture*

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[navaldockyards.org](http://navaldockyards.org)



**HMS Shark in dry dock at Chatham, 1940, see Cover Story on page 2.**

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## Cover story

This interesting watercolour (see page 1) is by war artist Eric Ravilious (1903–1942) and was painted when the *Shark* (54S) came to Chatham from its base at Harwich for docking between 2 February and 1 April 1940. Sadly *Shark* scuttled itself after enemy air attack off Norway on 6 July 1940. The identity of the other submarine is unknown.

The picture, reproduced by courtesy of Tate Images, has been described as follows:

‘As a war artist the range of options was limited; his request to paint an Admiral’s bicycle was turned down in no uncertain terms, and he dared not ask to draw the splendid statue of a marine that stood outside the barracks. Having little or no interest in military might, he chose instead to study naval vessels in his own way, approaching them from unusual angles to create the kind of interesting shapes he needed. Thus submarines in a dry dock are all curved propeller and rounded flank . . .’\*

**Richard Holme**

## Welcome from the editor

On behalf of the committee, I hope all our readers have managed to cope in the current pandemic crisis and are looking forward now to life returning to normal over the next few months.

In this issue, we dwell on our Society’s continuing struggles to conserve naval dockyard heritage at Portsmouth and Pembroke Dock. Excellent progress is being made at Mahon but disappointing to hear news of the demolition of dockyard workers’ housing at Albert Row, Bermuda (see page 5).

Sad to hear that a major UK dockyard building, albeit not a naval one, was demolished in January 2021. Associated British Ports razed the unlisted Solent Flour Mills in Southampton to the ground. This was despite the efforts of SAVE Britain’s heritage and the 20th Century Society to incorporate them in new cruise terminal plans.

Our annual conference on 30 October 2020, ‘Where Empires Collide: Dockyards and Naval Bases around the Indian Ocean’, was successful, with fifty-one delegates, including twenty-one non-members. There were eight excellent presentations with speakers from three continents. Necessarily the conference was conducted online, with excellent support from Sync Skills.

We have received a large number of book reviews and some have had to be carried forward for reasons of space. One of these (to be reviewed in our next issue), *Barracks, Forts and Ramparts – Regeneration challenges for Portsmouth Harbour’s Defence Heritage*, by Dr Celia Clark (with Martin Marks), has already enjoyed good reviews elsewhere. The *News* in Portsmouth, for example: ‘if there is one book you will want about the history of Portsmouth, this is all you need, having everything about the history of this great town, then city.’

We always welcome new contributors and are glad Amy Stokes, now a Master’s student at the University of Plymouth, has contributed an excellent article on the Asylum ward at Haslar, based on her undergraduate dissertation on the same topic, which won a national award from the British Commission for Maritime History in 2020.

All pictures are by authors unless otherwise stated. My thanks to Nicholas Blake and Rachel Smyth for their excellent help in getting this newsletter together.

**Richard Holme (editor) – richardholme@btinternet.com 07801 947339**

## Portsmouth Update

### Tipner West/Lennox Point

Portsmouth hasn’t had a conservation officer since early 2020 when the last one left. For a city which owes so much to defence heritage tourism, only using consultants makes no sense . . . In contrast, Gosport has the best conservationist in the area. As well as the proposed development at

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\* Ravilious – James Russell, Dulwich Picture Gallery, 2015.

Tipner, advice will be needed on conversion of the former Royal Marines Museum to a hotel, the conversion of Boathouse 6 as a new home for that Museum, Tipner West, Fraser Battery, dockyard buildings at risk, sea defences at Hilsea Lines, etc. . . . which is much better provided in-house.

On 9 March, Portsmouth planning committee was due to discuss an outline application to build an eight-storey car park and motorway interchange at Tipner to serve the proposed new community of 4,000 homes to be built at Tipner West, now renamed 'Lennox Point'. The *Portsmouth News* dubbed the car park the 'green mountain'; it would be jammed up against the M275. I pointed out that it ignores the warning from the MOD that any tall structures within the 'vulnerable building distance' of their explosives store on Horsea Island would have to be 'of robust construction and design so that should an explosion occur at the MOD storage facility, buildings nearby will not collapse or sustain damage. In this context, buildings that contain large areas of glass, tall structures (in excess of 3 storeys) and buildings of lightweight construction are of particular concern to the MOD.' (Defence Infrastructure Organisation Ministry of Defence, 28 January 2021, Tipner West Environmental Impact Statements February 2021). It's not clear whether the car park would be within this zone.

The Hampshire Buildings Preservation Trust, the Sustainable Conservation Trust and the NDS do not consider that the heritage implications of this application have yet been considered adequately as material planning considerations. The Planning Officer's report on the car park application notes that 'the idea of an "iconic" tall building to the entrance to the city is negated by [its] huge mass', which would impact on the adjacent protected areas of the harbour, especially accumulative effects for the Tipner West proposals. If the city aims to make Portsmouth a greener, healthy and accessible city with sustainable and integrated transport and a substantial improvement in its poor air quality, building an eight-storey car park at its entrance would send out all the wrong messages. We understand the pressure the city is under to meet government housing targets – and a leading councillor has instigated a petition to the government to allow local planning authorities to determine where to build homes to meet local need rather than trying to meet impossibly high housing targets which cannot be met in a coastal island. As the use of the existing park and ride has been falling, how will the council persuade commuters to use it? Will they charge people to drive into the city – as London does?

Alternative proposals to downgrade the M275 to an A road and reduce the 4,000 home proposal for Lennox Point and the 700 homes at Tipner East have been put forward by architect Walter Menteth. They are set out in his research reports (<https://bit.ly/2Q1JaVj>; <https://bit.ly/3cVkWoy>; <https://bit.ly/3mphcir>).

As a result of NDS lobbying, Cllr. Vernon Jackson and Mr Samuels, the head of regeneration, have agreed to 'consider the merits of the proposed alternative scheme as part of the Regulation 18 consultation. This would ensure that the proposals get full and thorough scrutiny from the LPA and the Transport teams. We will be confirming the timescales for this process shortly and hope you do take up the opportunity to submit these proposals.' Walter's ideas have much to recommend them, and the proposals contained in them would lead to a more effective, efficient and sustainable future for the city. Conflict with Historic England, the Environment Agency and the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust (HIWWT) would be avoided if they were adopted. On 9 March the Tipner interchange proposal was withdrawn for the city council 'to carry out briefing with members and further consider this application' . . .

However, in mid-March a glossy website announcing that the development at Tipner West was renamed 'Lennox Point' after Charles Lennox, Master General of the Board of Ordnance 'who was responsible for the protection and fortification of the south coast', was launched by the city regeneration team: <https://lennoxpoint.com/the-proposals/>. The creation of the two powder magazines from 1796 at a safe distance from the town was 'due to' Lennox.\* The 'marine employment hub' will be

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\* The listed Tipner Magazine buildings (see image overleaf) opened in 1801 for use by the Royal Navy following acquisition of land there between 1789 and 1791 – the risks emanating from an accidental explosion were minimised by situating the magazine complex in a remote corner of Portsmouth harbour. The buildings comprise two magazines (built 1796/8 and 1856) and a cooperage dating from 1798/1800. These are of massive brick construction and are not in the best of condition following industrial use.





**The Tipner Magazine Buildings.**

called Phoenix Quay, after HMS *Phoenix*, the Royal Navy's firefighting and damage repair training establishment, based at Tipner between 1946 and 1993 . . . We know there are some environmental concerns about developing Lennox Point on a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSI), a Special Protection Area (SPA) and a Ramsar site, and are following stringent process to ensure any environmental impacts can be mitigated appropriately. We are liaising closely with our statutory stakeholders including Natural England, The Environment Agency and other[s] . . . to keep everyone informed and up to date with our proposals . . . The development will only happen if statutory stakeholders

are satisfied.' Marine ground investigation of the sea bed and land contamination 'near the site' was said to begin via drones, a jack-up rig to drill a hole into the sea bed to recover soil samples and rock cores from a tow boat. Public consultation on the Local Plan and on the Tipner masterplan is promised in summer and autumn 2021.

But at the March council meeting leading Councillor Hugh Mason expressed doubts about whether the government will ever give permission to build on Tipner West. 'If we are going to build there we will have to provide biodiversity on the site . . . because we will have to meet these government targets.' More than 22,000 people have signed the HIWWT and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds petition against the proposal. The HIWWT said: 'These vital natural resources, once lost, can't be replaced or compensated for. We urgent need to re-think development at a local and national level. If we don't start prioritising nature's recovery, our cities will quickly become uninhabitable for both wildlife and people.' Reclaiming the mudflats around the peninsula would also release gases presently locked up in them.

The NDS, Hampshire Buildings Preservation Trust, Portsmouth Society, Hampshire County Archaeologist, University of Portsmouth and the new group Futures for Defence Heritage (see below) are being invited to join a Tipner Heritage Forum being set up by the city planning department. The draft protocol says its purpose is 'to consider, assess and comment upon emerging development proposals with specific regard to potential impacts upon designated and undesignated heritage assets, including potential setting impacts to heritage assets beyond the immediate site boundaries. This shall include consideration of pre-application heritage survey findings and mitigation measures as being progressed through site-wide Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). The purpose of the Forum is to assist PCC as local planning authority in reaching a decision on related planning applications.' Historic England will also be a member of this group.

### **Futures for Defence Heritage**

On 4 February the University School of Architecture set up a new group: Futures for Defence Heritage. Conservation professionals and academics including the NDS and Hampshire Buildings Preservation Trust are members. Its objectives are being drafted, but will cover the broad areas set out at the end of my harbour book: international research into how different countries protect defence heritage structures, how redundant defence sites are disposed of, and who benefits from the new land uses. This evidence will be used to make the case that the UK government land-disposal system needs reform in favour of local benefit. One of the conservation lecturers in the group is interested in setting her conservation students a project for restoration and conversion of the Tipner magazines next year.

### **Eastney**

The *Portsmouth News* reported on 27 February that the Royal Marines Wardroom Eastney had been sold to Grand Excelsior International Ltd., which proposes to convert it into a five-star hotel with at least eighty rooms and a swimming pool. Their group spokesperson said they would 'retain the site's

historic attributes, appeal and timeless décor' and that it would host 'plays, historical re-enactments and military ceremonies' as well as 'weddings, conferences and gala events'. The accompanying illustrations were extremely bland, but a resident of the former barracks said that most of those living there would welcome a five-star hotel rather than a pub chain or some sort of commercial development. 'The most important factor is saving the iconic building and its main Victorian features, as well as the battery. The former offices need to be gutted as they were awful and a significant upgrade is needed to the accommodation and services . . . As for the swimming pool out at the back where the garages are, then that will largely be hidden and the external lift to the rear is both novel and out of the way. Overall, I think it is the best option we could have had and the owner, an extremely wealthy businessman, is a former Portsmouth lad, born and initially raised in New Road and who is keen to raise the profile of Portsmouth and bring something to the city, perhaps as his legacy.'

**Dr Celia Clark**

### **Dockyard heritage conservation update**

On 1 February 2021, Ann Coats and Paul Brown attended an online meeting to discuss Naval Base Heritage with the Portsmouth Naval Base Commander and the Head of Base Infrastructure. We congratulated them on their progress in refurbishing The Parade.

We were shown slides of the renovation and re-occupation of parts of The Parade and Watering Island. Discussion included PNB priorities for the conservation strategy of the historic estate in the meeting and the possibility of future disposals.

We requested a site visit to The Parade and other buildings when Covid restrictions are lifted and requested internal and external photographs of the restoration of The Parade, and a map of further refurbishment, for our next Newsletter.

We were promised these by the middle of March, but they have not yet been sent. We look forward to receiving them to share with our members.

**Dr Ann Coats and Dr Paul Brown**

## **RIP Albert Row, Bermuda Dockyard**

Once again, we have witnessed the destruction by West End Development Corporation (Wedco, the government-created NGO which runs the dockyard) of unique Bermuda Dockyard heritage by managed decay. This time it is the formerly listed purpose-built homes of Albert Row, which housed dockyard workers from the 1840s to the mid-twentieth century.

The civilian dockyard workers' houses along Cochrane Road were a Bermudian solution to house essential workers, as there was no previous settlement near the new dockyard at Ireland Island. They were an amalgamation of British dockyard houses, with 'necessary' facilities (toilets and kitchens) separated from the main house, and the Bermudian vernacular style. They were a very rare occurrence, thought only to have been constructed at the new yards at Haulbowline Island in Cork Harbour and Bermuda. In 2007, they had clearly not been limewashed recently, but were a highly desirable estate of houses which would be valued in the UK for their unique attributes. Albert and Victoria Rows were built in 1846–9 and 1858. Other rows included Portland Place, Clarence Terrace and Marine Terrace, all demolished after Wedco took over. (W. R. Brockman, *Bermuda: Growth of a Naval Base, 1795–1932*, Bermuda Maritime Museum Press, 2009, pp.79–80.)

From 2012, NDS and Bermuda heritage organisations sustained a campaign to have both Victoria and Albert Rows refurbished, despite Wedco's policy of ending their maintenance and demolishing the unlisted Victoria Row. In a 2012 *Royal Gazette* article, Bermuda National Trust Executive Director voiced 'extreme concern' at the number of listed buildings and landmarks in the West End that had been allowed to deteriorate: 'Sadly, what we have seen in Dockyard, over the last fifty years, is a steady loss of many important buildings' (<https://www.royalgazette.com/other/news/article/20121029/whats-the-purpose-of-having-a-register-of-protected-buildings/>).

Following a brainstorming session with a number of stakeholders including the Bermuda National Trust, the National Museum of Bermuda and the Historic Buildings Advisory Committee in March 2016, the Planning Department insisted that Wedco draw up a comprehensive plan for the dockyard



**Images of Victoria Row in 2007 (above, A. Coats) and an interior fireplace (below, Bermuda National Trust).**

historic buildings so that the Planning Department would not have to deal *ad hoc* with individual sites. The demolition of Victoria Row was put on hold until discussions were completed, and the Director of Planning created a sub-committee to discuss possible solutions including a Heritage Preservation Trust.

The NDS submitted an emergency listing application on 18 May 2016 to halt demolition of Victoria Row, and questions were asked in the House of Assembly on 28 May. However, the demolition of the houses, costing \$331,400, began at the end of May.

Albert Row was listed, therefore hope remained that it would not be demolished, but the government issued a Notice to Delist Albert Row on 24 July 2020. NDS and other heritage organisations submitted objections in August. Regardless, on 30 September 2020 Walter H. Roban, JP, MP, Minister of Home Affairs, ‘following consultation with the public and with the Historic Buildings Advisory Committee . . . agreed to De-List the above-mentioned building.’ (Delisting Legal Notice: “Albert Row”, 6–12 Malabar Road, Sandys: <https://bit.ly/3fNwCvs>)

A robust case was made for preserving Albert Row, including steps to stabilise the buildings until the economic climate improved, but disregarded. No evidence of ‘consultation with the public’ was offered.

Albert Row still stood in December 2020, demolition having been delayed by Covid and asbestos removal. Some buildings were reportedly missing internal floors (<https://bit.ly/39KvVPy> 5 October 2020; <https://bit.ly/31SG4p3> 18 December 2020). However, Bernews and YouTube graphically reveal its demolition and the robustness of its Bermuda limestone blocks in February 2021 (<https://bit.ly/39MpFql> and <https://bit.ly/3usvFWA>).



The Society regrets that it failed to change the attitudes of Wedco and the Bermuda Government to value and conserve this valuable people’s heritage for future heritage-led regeneration and wider public benefit. It hopes that the houses were thoroughly recorded and any original artefacts such as fireplaces and house number plates removed and recorded as significant historic assets signifying the hey-day of Bermuda Dockyard’s nineteenth-century workforce. Such copious amounts of resultant cut limestone – rare, as quarries no longer function – must represent a valuable asset for future restoration projects, which the Society trusts has been safeguarded and audited. The NDS has not yet seen evidence of this, nor that Wedco has drawn up a comprehensive management plan for the remaining historic dockyard buildings.

**Dr Ann Coats, Chair**



## Museum and Heritage Project Updates

NDS has sponsored five museum and heritage projects, and in late January 2021 the project organisers provided the following interim reports on progress to date.

### 1. Sheerness Dockyard Preservation Trust (SDPT): Dockyard Church and Model

#### ***Build Progression (Dockyard Church)***

The main contractor for the build, Coniston, started work on site on 2 November 2020. Work to date is progressing well with the scaffolding in place around the perimeter of the building and to the top of the tower. Our architects have been working closely with the contractor deciding on materials for the building including stones, metal work and roof tiles. The conservation stonemasons are now on site and will be making a start in dismantling and re-building the tower.

#### ***Hoardings***

Our Community Outreach Coordinator has been working with a design company and photographer to design the hoardings surrounding the site. This was seen as a good opportunity to keep the community informed of the project and to give the Trust an opportunity to publicly thank our funders and supporters. The hoardings are due to be installed on Monday 25 January and will be a welcome addition to the site.

#### ***Great Dockyard Model***

The Great Dockyard Model was previously kept in store by English Heritage in Fort Brockhurst in Hampshire. The ownership of the model has been transferred to SDPT and a new storage facility has been identified in Lincolnshire. A specialist company, Thorpe Architecture, was commissioned to build specialist boxes to package and transport the model to its new home. Each box was catalogued to ensure that its contents were indexed for ease of retrieval. Thorpe Architecture was also commissioned to transport the model once packaged to Lincolnshire. This move took place on 27 November 2020, overseen by Simon Hawkins, Project Manager, and Will Palin, Trust Chairman.

Photographs of the move can be viewed here: <https://bit.ly/39Kxflu> and <https://bit.ly/31Udjbu>.

Now that the model is safely installed in Lincolnshire, work can begin on deciding the parts of the model that need conserving. The Trust has also been looking into getting 3D scans of the model in its entirety to aid with the interpretation and understanding of how the whole model fits together. We have now secured a comprehensive insurance package for the model during both its storage and transportation. Our Architect Team have been working on design ideas for the display case for the model and will be working with specialist exhibition designers to further develop these ideas.

*Catherine Hawkins*

### 2. Unicorn Preservation Society (Dundee)

Everyone here at HMS *Unicorn* in Dundee is safe and well. Despite the difficulties of the past year – including periods of temporary closure and staff furlough – we have been managing to progress with our NDS funded project on ‘Sir Robert Seppings, the Industrial Revolution and HMS *Unicorn*’.

The project is being led by Finlay Raffle, Learning & Engagement Officer at HMS *Unicorn*, and our long-term volunteer Professor Emeritus David Bradley. Progress has also slowed as David is in a vulnerable health category and so has been self-isolating during coronavirus.

We set out with four aims for the project.

(1) Create an exhibition for 2022 at HMS *Unicorn* linking Robert Seppings, the Industrial Revolution and ship design and construction. We have started making progress on this, particularly regarding background research, and we have written a paper on the subject which we are looking to have published during spring 2021. David is also giving an online public talk based upon the paper in February 2021. This work and research have provided us with the grounding on which to produce the exhibition in 2022.

(2) Development of a ‘Learning Box’ to accompany the exhibition. This is in development and again is being derived from our initial research. We are opening conversations with local teachers and schools to help inform our learning box, as the intention is for it to be a tool that can be

taken to and borrowed by schools. The learning material will be ready in time for the exhibition in 2022.

(3) A programme of community engagement and outreach to accompany the exhibition. Again, this is in a development stage. We are having to consider different options for this and react to how we foresee public engagement in the 'post-Covid' world of 2022. Initial plans are being discussed and will be built into the two-hundredth anniversary of the laying down of HMS *Unicorn*'s keel in 2022.

(4) A research visit to Chatham Dockyard to help inform the exhibition. This has been unable to take place due to Covid-19 and travel restrictions. The intention is still to make this trip when health considerations allow. Our current ambition is to achieve this trip in the summer or second half of 2021.

Overall, we have spent the last four months undertaking our initial primary research, which we can use as a springboard to develop our exhibition, events, and outreach material. Hopefully, as restrictions ease, we will be able to start working with more of our partners to develop all aspects of the project and thank you again to the NDS for supporting us to do this.

*Finlay Raffle*

### **3. Bluetown Remembered, Sheerness**

We are closed at the moment to the public but a volunteer is working on our booklet and this should be ready for April to link in with the launch of our intergenerational project. We secured some additional funding to help with the project and the Criterion lectures are all planned to re start in April.

The exhibition is planned for July and the project has been publicised with schools and through our Friends scheme, it will also feature in our new website and programme booklet which are being worked on and should launch at the end of this month. We are also posting items about Sheerness Dockyard on Facebook weekly. So we are still on track.

*Jenny Hurkett*

### **4. Antigua Dockyard Museum**

The NDS generously granted the Dockyard Museum £1,000 in support of our 8th March Project Event. Specifically, the grant is to support an artist initiative and education outreach with the Antigua State College. This report is an update on the progress of the initiative.

The first step, a tour of the dockyard and surrounding area, and a seminar on the lives of the enslaved Africans, was held with twelve students from the Antigua State College Art Course on 19 November.

Supplies for the student artists have been purchased and we are receiving regular updates from the course instructor.

Currently, we are planning on our public event. Due to pandemic protocols, we are severely curtailing public events and are shifting to a digital, live-stream model for public consumption. The core of the program, the artist installation, remains, as does the collaboration with the spoken word artist. Unfortunately, given current restrictions, we cannot have the Cobbs Cross Primary School students involved in the program. We are going to co-publish an exhibit brochure and keep the installation in place for at least two weeks for the public to safely and responsibly come and see the artwork. The artwork will be sold using a silent auction over this time, with the 8th March Project receiving a portion of the funds to support next year's initiative.

In addition to the event, we are currently finishing a social media campaign highlighting our research and promote our event in the month leading up to the 8th March event. The events can be followed on our Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/archaeologyhistoryantigua>.

Thank you again to the NDS for making this happen in such a complicated year.

*Dr Christopher Waters*

### **5. Museum of Slavery and Freedom: Chip on Your Shoulder exhibition, Deptford**

#### ***Timeline***

1 October 2020: go live. Opened by a locally born singer Khadija Jajue ([www.musickj.com](http://www.musickj.com)): here we discussed the preparation and fabrication of materials, as well exploring the maps of our ancestry.



3 October 2020: Chip on Your Shoulder exhibition attended by Councillor Kalu of Lewisham Council; it was suggested we send pics so we can take it into schools.

12 October 2020: Tour and Walk by MA students from the Centre of Architectural Research at Goldsmiths; we had over twenty-eight students and lecturers.

17 October 2020: Live two-hour show on Galaxy Radio from the Strand, Deptford: Galaxy Radio has a global audience and the response was phenomenal.

21 October 2020: A day with Jane Horrocks and Rough Crew TV. We had over thirty-five in the audience on the day.

5 November 2020: Walk and Tour guide with Dr Janna Graham, Lecturer, Visual Cultures, Programme Leader, BA Curating, Goldsmiths, University of London, and her students (approx. twenty attendees). Julian Kingston gave a five-minute talk about the Lenox project and Convoys Wharf.

5 November 2020: Project Manager Colin Murphy at Lend Lease Developers decided to remove the hoarding signage showing Francis Drake, which we found misleading and glorifying the atrocities he committed globally.

17 November 2020: The Good and Bad side of Slavery with Professor Seydi of Anta Diop University (Dakar, Senegal) and Goldsmiths, on live Zoom.

24 November 2020: Small Acts Zoom workshop with Dr Shawn Sobers of Bristol University, as well as introducing Chip on Your Shoulder and its relevance to Deptford and Bristol.

From its launch in October 2020 the exhibition Chip on Your Shoulder has been on permanent display in the Longshore Room at the Pepys Resource Centre and has now become a permanent feature and a focal point about the naval history of Royal Dockyard Deptford. The launch of the Deptford People's Heritage Museum took place online on 20 February 2021. The museum is housed in the Pepys Resource Centre at Deptford.

We are continuing collaboration with Goldsmiths, the Lenox project, and Anta Diop University. Our aim is to ensure that Chip on Your Shoulder remains a focal point in Lewisham borough by creating educational and community-led digital and physical activities to teach and empower others about the untold stories we are uncovering. Goldsmiths Computing Department has offered support to set up more advanced digital software, to capture objects and help map our ancestors. Chip on Your Shoulder will be on cultural display at St Andrews Community Centre in Brockley during June 2021, and Action 2000 Centre in April 2021, St Luke's Church, organised with Eubanks Boxing Club. Curfew Music Studio is delighted to be involved and we are in discussion on taking it to Southampton.

### ***Working in partnership with the Lenox project***

Feedback from Lenox has been encouraging and empowering and they want to continue supporting any exhibition that explores dockyards, shipbuilding and sailing ships. They have donated two new copies of *The Master Shipwright's Secrets* [reviewed on page 00]. Lenox has resumed holding monthly management meetings on Zoom and Ken Thomas [the exhibition organiser] joins their trustee committee. We also hope to continue developing the NDS presence.

*Ken Thomas*  
**Dr Paul Brown**

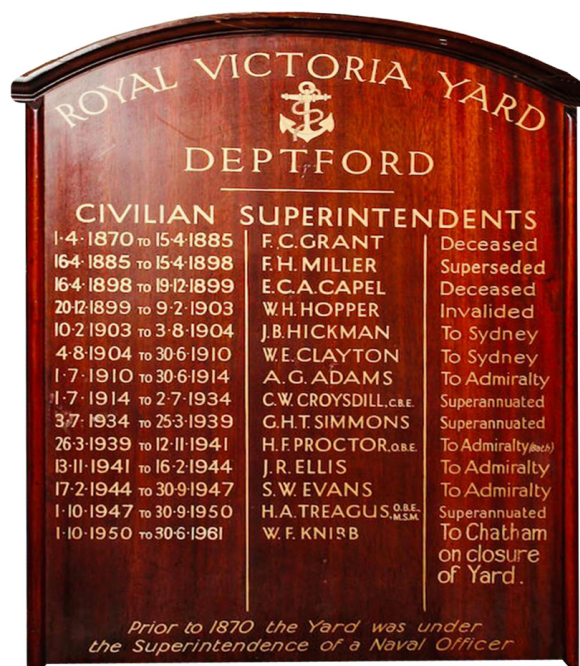
## **Royal Victoria Victualling Yard, Deptford – Superintendents' 'Honours Board', 1870–1961**

Land for a victualling yard at Deptford was acquired in 1742 to replace the cramped Victualling Commissioners' storehouses and wharfage at Tower Hill in London. The yard was renamed Royal Victoria Yard (RVY) in 1858 following a visit by Queen Victoria. RVY became the largest of the Royal Navy's victualling yards, and in the early years provisions delivered under contract were redistributed to other yards (known as 'outports') both home and overseas. RVY survived bomb damage

during the Second World War, and finally closed in June 1961 after a life of 219 years.

As at most Admiralty establishments it was the practice to hang an 'Honours Board' in the Superintendent/Officer-in-Charge's office listing the incumbents of the post in date order. Right is a photograph of the RVY Board listing the Superintendents back to 1870, when the first civilian was appointed. After the yard closed the board was displayed in the Victualling HQ offices in London and then Bath, together with those of other closed establishments, but following the demise of the successor RN Supply & Transport Service (RNSTS) in 1994 such historical reminders were out of favour. The RVY Board together with various others seems to have been offered for sale by auction in 2008, but whether it was in fact sold and where it is now I have no idea.

The first four entries on the Board might suggest that being Superintendent of a Victualling Yard in the late nineteenth century was not without its hazards!



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**Bernard Mennell**

## Falkland Maritime Heritage Trust

The Falkland Islands have a unique legacy of nineteenth-century sailing ships, often crippled after attempts to get round Cape Horn, then condemned at Stanley to a life as storage hulks. Several survive to this day albeit in a fragile state and the Trust seeks to inform and educate with narrative, photos and emotive video on its acclaimed new website, [www.fmht.co.uk](http://www.fmht.co.uk).

One example of a former hulk is the *Lady Elizabeth*, built at Sunderland in 1879, as a 1,155-ton iron barque. She was condemned at Stanley in 1913 after striking a rock and drifted to her present resting place in 1936. Trustee Mensun Bound recounts:

She is the quintessential Cape Horner. Robust, elegant and eminently functional, she represents the culmination of eight thousand years of wind-ship development before seafaring turned to



Sue Luxton



Sue Lixton

steam. But more than that . . . she is our Eiffel Tower, Statue of Liberty and Tower of London all rolled into one . . . she is made of perishable metal and . . . she may last for years, or she might go in the next big storm westerly.

In the event of her sadly disintegrating the Trust have plans afoot to preserve some key parts such as the anchor and poop deck, the latter with steering mechanism.

Indeed, parts of the American packet ship *Charles Cooper* have similarly been preserved in the Falklands Island Museum, situated in the former dockyard area of Stanley – [www.falklands-museum.com](http://www.falklands-museum.com). Parts of two American ships, *Snow Squall* and *St Mary's*, have been similarly preserved at museums in Maine in the USA.

I was lucky to view many of the hulks on nine work trips to the Falklands between 1990 and 2001. I actually went on board the *Jhelum*, a Victorian merchant ship of 428 tons built at Liverpool in 1849, but she has now all but disintegrated.

The website also highlights the Trust's discovery in 2019 of the wreck of the German cruiser *Scharnhorst*, sunk in the Battle of the Falklands in 1914. Future plans include a section on the SS *Great Britain*, which was rescued from the Falklands in 1970 and brought back to Bristol.

**Richard Holme**

## **Pembroke Dock: can a unique historic royal dockyard be saved from almost total loss?**

The royal dockyard established at Pembroke Dock from 1814 is unique: the only one in Wales and on the west coast of Britain, and the only one created solely as a shipbuilding facility. It supplanted a private shipyard in Milford established in 1796, which was taken over by the Navy Board in 1800 due to the owners' bankruptcy. Milford Dockyard functioned until 1809, when the Navy Board decided to develop the Pater site as a cheaper shipbuilding undertaking, as the government already owned land around Paterchurch tower. (J. D. Davies, 'The Strange Life and Stranger Death of Milford Dockyard', *The Royal Dockyards and the Pressures of Global War, 1793–1815*, NDS Transactions 13, 2020, pp. 29–53.)

In the 1860s Pembroke Dock became the second royal dockyard (after Chatham) to be equipped for building iron ships. The thirteen slips (more than in any other dockyard) made Pembroke Dock the principal British building dockyard for over a hundred years. It built more than 260 warships for the Royal Navy, including many of the most prestigious warships of the nineteenth and early



twentieth centuries, as well as five royal yachts. Many of these vessels were built on the two large slipways 1 and 2 at the western end of the yard, now threatened by current development proposals. The royal dockyard was the reason for the establishment of the town of Pembroke Dock; without the former, the latter would not exist.

Between January and March 2021, the NDS collaborated with Save the Commodore Trust and Amenity Societies, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, Save Britain's Heritage, the Victorian Society and the Georgian Group, to object to proposals to infill listed structures and construct two 40m high buildings in the dockyard. We consider that these proposals would cause substantial harm to the significance of Pembroke Dock Conservation Area and the loss of many Grade II and II\* listed heritage assets. NDS contends that the arguments presented for this scheme do not justify such harm, that no evidence has been offered for 'reversing' such infilling and that insufficient evidence has been offered for considering alternative brownfield sites. The NDS called on the Local Planning Authority to refuse planning permission.

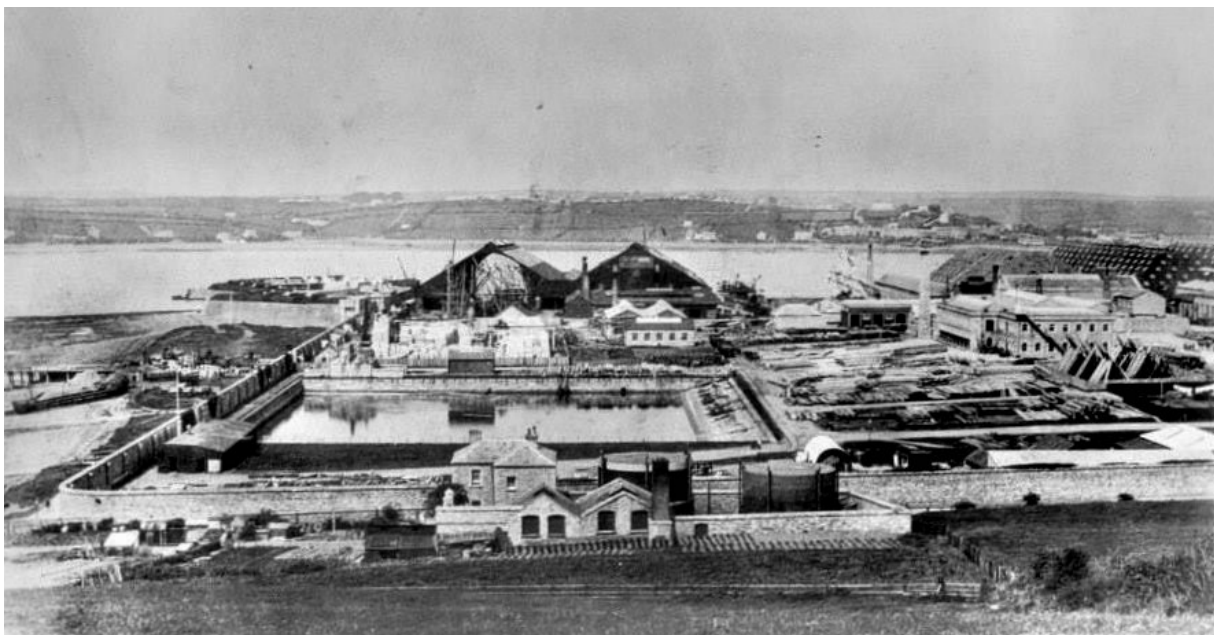
Pembroke Dockyard shares many characteristics with Sheerness Dockyard, both built for their deep-water access and convenience to shipping routes. Their dockyards founded their communities and maintained their economies until closure; both are now vulnerable to controlling developments by port authorities. Each maintains resilient coastal functions: Sheerness Port is one of the UK's largest importers of cars and fresh produce from Europe, while Pembroke Dock is a major ferry port for Ireland. The dockyard heritage of both has thereby suffered.

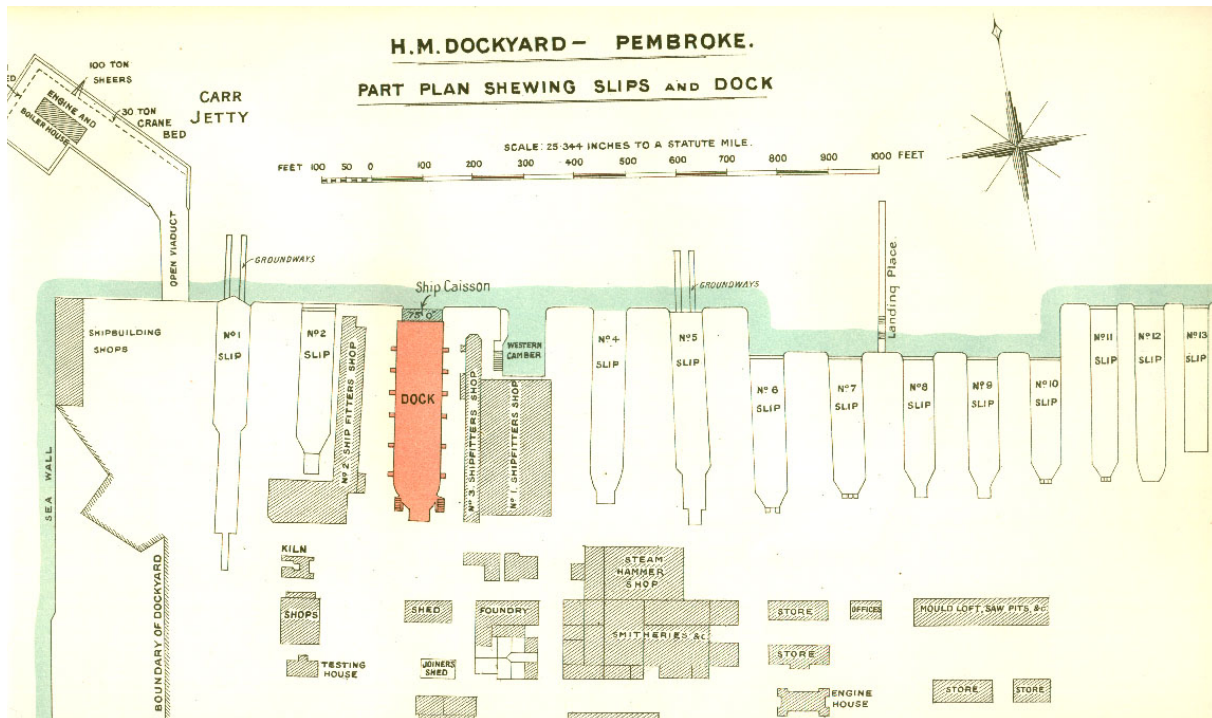
Pembroke Dockyard's eastern slips were sacrificed in 1979 for the Irish ferry terminal and the deep-water berth Quay 1. After Sheerness closed in 1960 and was sold to a commercial port operator, highly significant naval structures were demolished by the later 1970s. The 1858 Boat Store there remains one of the most important listed buildings at risk in the country, but is suffering severe deterioration.

This World Monuments Fund statement about Sheerness could also be applied to Pembroke Dockyard: 'Inaccessible to the public, the landscape and architectural ensemble suffered from lack of stewardship and use, while multiple ownership issues affected preservation and accessibility' (<https://bit.ly/3urODVR>).

Despite its significance to Wales, the heritage of Pembroke Dockyard and its surroundings has arguably never been treated with the respect it deserves and has never been comprehensively interpreted in ways accessible to the public.

**1. The western section of a large panoramic view of the dockyard, showing the Timber Pond in the centre, with Slips 1 and 2 to the north and the Graving Dock to their east, c. 1895 before Carr Jetty was built. (Public domain)**





**Above: 2. The Admiralty Dock Book, June 1909, shows all thirteen building slips, the Dry/Graving Dock with the caisson in place and nearby workshops. (The Great War Primary Documents Archive, <https://bit.ly/2RdTs5d>)**

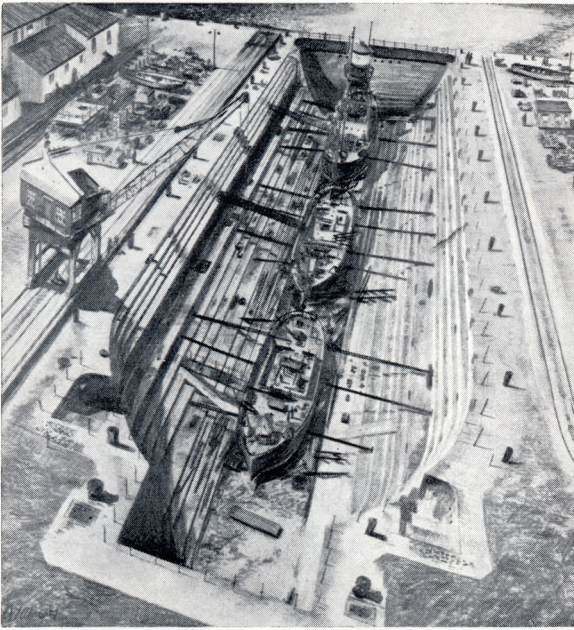
**Right: 3. Caisson within the flooded Graving/Dry Dock (2013). (With permission of Martin Caveney)**



A major reason why Pembroke Dock's heritage has been undervalued is its inaccessibility. The dockyard closed in 1926, beyond living memory. This reduced a prosperous area to depression, many of its craftsmen dispersed to other royal dockyards, the agricultural hinterland losing its local market. Between 1921 and 1931, 3,500 people left the town (Phillips, *Pembroke Dockyard and the Old Navy*, 2014, p. 47). Unemployment was high until 1931, when the largest flying-boat base in the world was created, its aircraft playing a significant role in the Battle of the Atlantic. Although the RAF base closed in 1957, the navy retained a small area of the dockyard as a moorings and marine salvage depot until the mid-1990s.

The RAF left sound brick-built buildings such as messes and barrack blocks, many re-used as offices, briefing rooms and watch rooms, and the two large flying-boat hangars. The Graving Dock was utilised by a private ship repair and building company, R. S. Hayes Ltd. However, no overall plan secured the future of Pembroke Dockyard. The oil industry arrived in Milford Haven at about





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4. R. S. Hayes advertisement showing the Graving/Dry Dock. R. S. Hayes closed by 1961. (Public domain)

the same time as the RAF left, so attention was diverted towards building refineries which drove the new Pembrokeshire economy.

The former Captain-Superintendent's House was converted successfully into the Commodore Hotel/Club for many years. A Sunderland flying boat was brought back to the dockyard and displayed to the public, a motor museum opened in the Dockyard Chapel and other small-scale businesses and activities took root. The RAF barrack blocks became last resort accommodation for Pembrokeshire families. However, the oil industries and the large oil-powered Pembroke power station became the main sources of employment.

In the 1970s and 1980s, South Pembrokeshire District Council decided to demolish most of the former RAF buildings within the dockyard, creating much wasteland. The Irish ferry, moving from Swansea, justified a road that weaved a destructive path through the town and the dockyard wall to the new terminal, ignoring much of the historic grid symmetry of Pembroke Dock and the dockyard itself. The terminal, with its new ferry berth, buried some of the central building slips in the yard. At the same time, other civilian building slips and dry docks to the east of the dockyard were buried under a landfill scheme. Eventually the dockyard became owned by Milford Haven Port Authority (MHPA) and Pembrokeshire County Council.

The county council treated some of its retained property well. The Dockyard Chapel was saved from the threat of demolition and underwent a magnificent restoration through the Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI). However, the rest of the dockyard was largely allowed to decay, although the THI did renovate some of the other offices and former dockyard officers' residences. The market, built by the Admiralty just outside the dockyard walls in 1826, was also magnificently restored.



When the MoD disposed of the salvage and mooring depot, it was purchased by small-scale businesses which are now threatened by eviction if these planning applications are passed (MHPA has legacy compulsory purchase powers), but the greatest part was acquired by the MHPA and very quickly deteriorated. The Commodore Hotel was severely damaged by fire in 2006.

## **2020/21 Planning Applications**

MHPA's outline planning application, 20/0732/PA, was for 'Demolition, part demolition and infill, modification of slipways, erection of buildings and ancillary development – for port related activities including the manufacture of marine energy devices, boat manufacture and repair and erection of plant'. It was closely followed by Listed Building Consent applications:

20/0893/LB Slipway No. 1 and No. 2, Part demolition and modification of slipways

20/0896/LB Infill of Timber Pond

20/0897/LB Infill of Graving Dock and removal and restoration of caisson

and one Conservation Area consent application:

20/0901/CA – Conservation Area Demolition of Various Buildings, Pembroke Dockyard

The Grade II\* Graving/Dry Dock would be infilled and partially built over, the Grade II Timber Pond infilled and built over, and the Grade II Building Slips Nos 1 and 2 partially demolished and removed. These threatened structures are the last and most important features of the magnificent and unique assemblage of thirteen slips, graving dock and timber pond constructed and functioning from 1814 to 1926.

These assets represent the core of an historic assemblage of thirty-five listed and scheduled buildings within the dockyard. Others include Grade II and II\* naval houses, two Grade II Second World War flying-boat hangars and the Grade II\* former Dockyard Chapel, the Defensible Barracks and two nineteenth-century Martello towers. The Grade I listed Paterchurch Tower, dating from the fourteenth century, survives as a fortified watch tower with a crenelated parapet. It is very close to one of the proposed new sheds, which will encroach on its setting.

As Pembroke County Council does not publish planning objections beyond Amenity Societies, the public cannot see our objections. We therefore approached the press to publicise this issue and stimulate debate. We are grateful to SPAB, Newsquest's *Western Telegraph*, *Tenby Observer* and particularly BBC Wales and Wales Online's *Western Mail* for publicising our campaign.

## **These planning applications contravene Welsh and Pembroke Dock Town's policies**

We now live in a responsible era when significant community assets merit planning protection. Planning Policy Wales (Edition 10, 2018) states:

For any development proposal affecting a listed building or its setting, the primary material consideration is the statutory requirement to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building, its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. (Para 6.1.10)

For listed buildings, 'the aim should be to find the best way to protect and enhance their special qualities, retaining them in sustainable use.' (Para 6.1.11) Pembroke Dock Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Plan (2017) states that

There is a strong presumption against the granting of planning permission for developments, including advertisements, which damage the character or appearance of a conservation area or its setting to an unacceptable level. (Para 6.1.15)

MHPA's scheme contravenes this Plan as well as Planning Policy Wales policies to conserve designated buildings. The Design and Access Statement states that MHPA owns *none* of the proposal site; and that it 'does not lie within any statutory designations' (pp. 10, 16). Yet it plans to cause severe harm to six listed structures and the Conservation Area.

Rejecting this application does not mean that the promised 288 to 975 full-time-equivalent sustainable energy industry jobs in Pembrokeshire will be lost. Pembroke Dock Marine Project could be

located elsewhere in the Haven. With thought and negotiation, the Waterloo Industrial Estate could accommodate the scheme. This site already possesses office space and a skilled and experienced workforce to support the scheme. Moreover, its good road access would avoid outsized loads travelling through the town. Other alternatives are Black Bridge and partnerships with other big companies in the Haven (Dragon LNG, Puma LNG and Valero).

### **Other UK dockyards show what could be achieved at Pembroke Dock**

By rejecting the viability of heritage to drive economic and social benefit to the community, MHPA ignores economic evidence from other dockyards. Chatham Dockyard was closed in 1984, with devastating effects on local and regional economies. Today Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust employs 114.5 full-time equivalent staff, and over a hundred businesses and organisations operate in Trust buildings. Activity at the Dockyard was estimated to have contributed an estimated £26.2m to the Kent and Medway economies in 2017/18 (DC Research, Economic Value and Tourism Impact of Chatham Historic Dockyard Final Report October 2018) and currently £29m with 550 people employed per annum (<https://bit.ly/20oGyAb>).

Portsmouth Dockyard heritage area was set up in 1985. The city welcomed around 9.4m visitors in 2015 (8,700,000 day-visitors and 737,000 staying visitors), of whom nearly 1m visited the dockyard, contributing £610.3m to the local economy. The latest employment figures show 12,777 jobs are now supported by tourism. This represents 12.1 per cent of all jobs in the city (Economic Impact of Tourism – Portsmouth 2015, Tourism South East). Within the heritage area, the International Boatbuilding Training College preserves traditional skills though new build and restoration projects.

Today, heritage is recognised widely as an income generator for museums and businesses, so Pembroke Dock would benefit more swiftly from wider tourism appetites for dockyard heritage, learning from Portsmouth and Chatham's two successful models.

Reviving traditional skills can also provide valuable and aspirational training for young people. The Lenox Project, founded 2011, aims to build and launch a full-size replica of the Lenox, a state-of-the-art naval ship built in 1678 in Deptford Dockyard for Charles II. The project, to be based in the former Royal Deptford Dockyard, will 'promote educational, teaching and employment opportunities through a maritime and manufacturing skills and training programme and apprenticeship programmes' (<http://www.buildthelenox.org/>). A similar project would be desirable and appropriate at Pembroke Dock, restoring shipbuilding craft skills carried out there and delivering clear community benefits.

### **Sustainable energy and heritage regeneration at Pembroke Dock**

The Royal Marine and Army forts and garrisons established to defend Pembroke Dockyard, many maintained into current memory, have combined with the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force to give the area a rich military character. Pembroke Dockyard represents the core of this heritage.

It is not just these physical remains which are so unique, but the knowledge of working in them. The dockyard brought an entirely new workforce to the area, many originating from western England and bringing their families with them, giving the town and wider area its unique demographic. Pembroke Dock workers 'earned a nationwide recognition of their skill and ability' (George Dicker, cited by L. Phillips, *History of Pembroke Dock*, <https://bit.ly/3rS6L7R>).

Alongside an Energy Infrastructure Project located elsewhere in the Haven, an inclusive heritage-based economic regeneration scheme for Pembroke Dock would integrate the work of the three major Pembroke Dock heritage organisations, West Wales Maritime Heritage Society in Hancock's Yard, Save the Commodore Trust proposals for the Commodore Hotel and Pembroke Dock Heritage Centre in the restored Dockyard Chapel.

These would work alongside other thriving Pembroke Dock local history groups and the local planning authority, constitute an inclusive foundation for a multi-faceted heritage programme.

Comprehensive interpretation of the dockyard through an integrated shipbuilding training centre, museum/visitor centres and the Commodore Hotel would generate income, train young people and open the dockyard to the public for the first time in its history. The Timber Pond could become an attractive water leisure facility.

Freeing up this historic space within the western dockyard would offer more diverse employment

**5 The Grade II Timber  
Pond image (2013).  
(With permission of  
Adrian James)**



opportunities for the town in the heritage, educational and marine-based leisure activities sector. Pembrokeshire already has a major rural tourism industry – it is now time to add dockyard heritage to the offer. The NDS has spearheaded a campaign to inform the community that this decision should not be binary, sustainable energy jobs or heritage: there is room for both.

Our press campaign has borne fruit, so the public can see alternative debate, especially through Laura Clements' *Western Mail* two-page feature 'Creating a new future for one of our great dockyards' (6 March 2021). 20 April 2021 Planning Meeting: no decision was taken, pending a Welsh government ruling on whether to call it in after the May elections.

**Dr Ann Coats** (with information from Adrian James, Save the Commodore Trust Chair)

## **Naval Hospital Isla del Rey, Minorca, in the spring of 2021**

Despite all the complications that Covid 19 has caused for progress, we have still managed to achieve surprising progress over the winter.

The first question that most people ask us is about the Hauser & Wirth project – see *Menorca – Hauser & Wirth*. There's an almost tangible excitement stirring following news of the impending inauguration on 17 July 2020. An old hospital dating from 1784, built by Admiral Langara for his troops who were in Mahon harbour for nine years with up to forty-six ships, has passed through an astonishing metamorphosis into a stunning modern exhibition centre, respecting the architecture of the original structure. There will be eight galleries over 1,500 sq m and the outside area will include a sculpture trail beside the gardens and olive trees, as noted in a recent press release:

Manuela Wirth comments: 'Iwan, Marc, and I are honoured and excited that Mark Bradford's exhibition will inaugurate Hauser & Wirth Menorca. Our dream has been to place powerful contemporary art like his within this very special context. Isla del Rey is an extraordinary place of wild nature, beautiful light and sea, with a fascinating history.

You will have the opportunity of visiting throughout the day on the catamaran ferry, which will be regularly transporting passengers to and fro. However, I suspect that there is going to be so much to see on a visit to Isla del Rey that many visitors will find they have to come back several times to appreciate all there is to experience. Apart from the Art Gallery and its canteen serving high-quality local products, a visit should not be missed to see the ground floor of the three-hundred-year-old British naval hospital. Each of the twenty rooms here is filled with items of historical interest we have been given over the last sixteen years since restoration work began. We have recently inaugurated a new ophthalmology room, full of fascinating equipment, including a selection of glass eyes! The X-ray room has received a legacy of various early machines, all carefully restored by a skilled French volunteer. The medical rooms, the pharmacy rooms, library and chapel, amongst others, have all continued to benefit from constant improvements and new items of interest.





The restoration of the south wing of the old British hospital has been funded by the cultural department of the Spanish government. This is the only part which has not yet been restored, but the builder is now poised and ready to go, so we should see it completed by early September. In the meantime, a British team is currently working on rediscovering the old 'Bog House', strategically placed just above the sea, as well as making safe a delightful path that circumnavigates the whole island offering magnificent views across the harbour.

On the first floor of the hospital building we continue to prepare the Interpretation Centre covering the history of the harbour of Mahon, each room telling a different story: from the basilica of the sixth century with two immense replicas of Roman mosaics, through the various occupations of Minorca up to more recent times. Considering this has all been done by volunteers, it's an astonishing achievement and is thanks to a combination of skills and experience by our international volunteer team, who make an early start on a Sunday morning for the benefit of a wonderful old building, which has grown to be part of all our lives. Our only concern now is that Covid will not prevent international travel this year and that you will all be able to enjoy the opportunity of visiting us and seeing Isla del Rey for yourselves.

**Beverley Ward**

## **'His delusions chiefly consisted in his fancying himself an Angel King': Mental illness and the Royal Navy at Haslar Asylum, 1832–35**

Hugh Griffiths met his death in the Asylum of Royal Hospital, Haslar in 1837, after having been admitted five years earlier for 'imbecility of mind' after he was discharged from service in HMS *Volage*. Griffiths was a young seaman of twenty-seven years old and would have potentially had a long life in service had he not been inflicted with mental illness. His case in the asylum journal suggests he was in good physical health, 'but his intellectual faculties appear entirely gone'.<sup>1</sup> Although this article will not delve into why men like Griffiths developed mental illnesses at sea in the nineteenth century, it will explore the lives of these naval men whilst receiving care. Based on my undergraduate dissertation, it will study the eighty-four men admitted to the asylum at Haslar naval hospital between 1832 and 1835 using the journal kept by staff.<sup>2</sup> It will provide an understanding towards the experiences of mental health in the Navy during a time of peace in Britain. The main focus will be to explore the treatment these men received under the care of the Admiralty at Haslar. Mental health in the navy remains an understudied topic in scholarship compared to the vast amount of literature available on civilian Victorian asylums, however recent studies are beginning to emerge on mental disorder in the Age of Sail.<sup>3</sup> By studying this it provides us with a broader understanding of medicine and society during the nineteenth century. It can reveal the public and state attitude to the care of those who were part of Britain's greatest defence systems at the time. This article argues that the Royal Navy acted as a paternal system and it acknowledged mental illness in the service. It offered an institution that was managed through the Admiralty to have control over the care of these complex illnesses. It was at the time the main and possibly the only naval asylum in England.

To gain an overview of the men that were admitted to the asylum ward, quantitative analysis allows for trends and patterns to be acknowledged. The research process involved transcribing the cases between 1832 and 1835 from the asylum journal, inputting these details into a database to follow up with analysis and categorisation of this data. **Table 1**<sup>4</sup> shows the age groups of those admitted in this period. Although the most common age category was 40–50 years old, there were naval men of all ages being admitted during these years. The youngest, of 16 years old, was John Naughton, who displayed symptoms of insanity and mental aberration.<sup>5</sup> The eldest, 84 years old, was Thomas Somers, admitted for an unsound mind.<sup>6</sup>

In another category of analysis, there are similar results for the rankings of the men admitted to the asylum. **Table 2**<sup>7</sup> shows that 'ratings' were the most common rankings of patients admitted in these years.<sup>8</sup> However, there were other positions that may prove surprising. Captain Charles Strangeways was the only captain admitted to the asylum, and was suffering with amentia (severe congenital mental

disability) and apoplexy. A letter from Surgeon James Scott to Haslar explains that Strangeways had been a lieutenant on HMS *Euryalus* whilst Scott had been a surgeon on board, but detailed that Strangeways had no recollection of his service there.<sup>9</sup> Winfield notes that Strangeways was Commander of the *Clio* in 1823 for three years.<sup>10</sup> Although the circumstances surrounding his entry to the asylum cannot be clearly uncovered, his case illustrates that no ranking was immune from experiencing mental illnesses in the nineteenth century. There were extravagant public accounts in newspapers highlighting public attitudes towards mental illness during the time. A newspaper report of Irishman Patrick Walsh published in 1830 in the *Southampton Herald* described an elaborate account of him as the ringleader of a mutiny on board the *Hermione* in 1797 and how he had been admitted to Haslar Asylum. The newspaper described him as a 'ferocious maniac', 'wretched man' and 'a pest to society'.<sup>11</sup> The accounts portray Walsh as a dangerous man, illustrating the complex fears and thoughts of society surrounding the issue of mental health which newspapers spread through these elaborate accounts.

The conditions of mental illness experienced by naval men during this period are difficult to categorise. Throughout the nineteenth century, medical men could not establish the boundaries when diagnosing madness.<sup>12</sup> Michael J. Clark discusses the definitions termed by medical psychologists of the nineteenth century regarding a 'sound' and 'unsound' mind. He argues that these men suggested, 'one passed insensibly into the other through a whole range of intermediate conditions exhibiting various degrees of departure from the ideal of "sound Mind"'.<sup>13</sup> Although all the patients admitted to Haslar asylum represented that of an 'unsound' mind, this does not remove the difficulty of establishing a diagnosis when there was often a combination of conditions displayed. For example, William McCarthy, a Commissioned Boatman, experienced Insanity and mental delusions, alongside suicidal attempts.<sup>14</sup> In another example, a Lieutenant William Hooper was described as having 'violent mental excitement' and experiencing delusions.<sup>15</sup> These patients portray the complexity of mental illness in the nineteenth century. Additionally, it highlights the confidence that the navy felt equipped to deal with these complex mental illnesses.

Asylums and medical thought were at a transitional period regarding treatment for mental

**Table 1. Age of patients admitted to Haslar, 1832–35**

Under 20	3
20–30	21
30–40	17
40–50	24
50–60	9
60–70	2
70–80	4
80+	1
No age provided	3

**Table 2. Ranks and rates of patients admitted into Haslar, 1832–5**

Captain	1
Officer	15
Warrant Officer	7
Surgeon	3
Purser	3
Rating	29
Enlisted Marine	8
Cook	7
Other	5
Greenwich Pensioner	6

**Table 3. Common treatments used with patients admitted to Haslar, 1832–5**

Purgatives	70
Leeches	12
Blood letting	7
Seton in neck <sup>16</sup>	11
Cupping	5
Head shaved	8
Exercise and reading	9 (8 in 1835)
Restraint and confinement	41



illness during the 1830s. Medical knowledge of mental illness during the early nineteenth century continued to be based on humoral theory. This had its foundations in ancient history, when disease was understood through an imbalance of four humours: blood, phlegm, black bile and yellow bile. It was believed that black bile, with its links to melancholy, could be observed through clotted blood, excrement or vomit.<sup>17</sup> L. S. Jacyna argues that purging the body through the treatment of bloodletting and purgative medicines would rebalance the humours.<sup>18</sup> The moral reform movement in asylum practice took a strong hold in the 1840s, where humane treatment was encouraged over restraint and medicine. Although the research in **Table 3**<sup>19</sup> shows Haslar worked in line with the medical knowledge of the time, as the most common treatments were purgatives, there are some examples of moral treatment being offered to patients. These included reading, occupation, and exercise. For example, marine William Rogers came to the asylum as despondent and had attempted suicide whilst at sea. He was treated with a seton stitch, cathartics and was encouraged to take exercise in the airing ground.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, a report from 1843–44 revealed that the Admiralty had provided Haslar asylum with a small boat to take the patients out on excursions. It reports the strong positive effect this had on the men for their mental wellbeing.<sup>21</sup> This report highlights how the humane methods which arise in the 1830s develop further into the next decade. William Burnett, Physician-General of the Royal Navy, said that ‘in the past physical restraint had been too frequent’.<sup>22</sup> In 1834, the Admiralty sent instructions to their Royal Hospitals Haslar and Plymouth that no treatment had been found as effective as, ‘exercise or moral treatment . . . certain books, paper, pens, ink, drawing materials . . . will be furnished for their use at your discretion’.<sup>23</sup> These examples illustrate the Admiralty’s shift in thought towards the treatment of its mentally ill sailors. The navy clearly benefitted from establishing the asylum under their control instead of continuing to have sailors sent to Bethlem or Hoxton as a report by Dr John Weir had revealed their maltreatment whilst at these institutions.<sup>24</sup> These examples show the Admiralty was implementing contemporary ideas emerging of moral treatment for mental illness.

However, it must be remembered that there continued to be a high number of patients that were restrained or confined, and 83 per cent of patients admitted were given purgatives. This means that although the evidence points towards a small shift in their treatment methods, medical treatment remained common for the mentally ill at this naval asylum.

In conclusion, the examples discussed in this article prove that the Royal Navy did act as a paternalistic system providing care for its mentally ill sailors as individuals, during their service or in retirement. It reveals that no ranking or age could escape from the potential experience of mental illness at some point during their careers, or indeed after their time in service. Medicine, particularly purgatives, continued to be the main form of treatment for the patients at Haslar during these four years, however there were glimpses of moral reform through the encouragement of walking, reading and occupation in the asylum. This research can help provide a new understanding of medicine and healthcare during the nineteenth century. Overall, it is clear that the study of mental illness through a naval lens can develop historians’ understanding of the social and cultural maritime world.

**Amy Stokes**

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- 5 TNA, ADM 305/102, p. 283.
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- 7 Ratings included the positions of Boatswain’s Mate, Clerk, Cook’s Mate, Boy, Purser’s Steward and Seaman.

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- 14 TNA, ADM 305/102, p. 273.
- 15 TNA, ADM 305/102, p. 327.
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## Transactions news

### Transactions volumes for 2021 and 2022

Transactions volume 14, *Naval Air Stations and the Defence of Dockyards* (the 2016 conference), will be published and sent to members this spring.

In September, the society will celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of our inaugural meeting, held at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich. We will publish a bumper anniversary double edition of Transactions, comprising Transactions volume 15, *The Role of Naval Bases in the Mediterranean During the Eighteenth Century* (the 2018 conference), and Transactions volume 16, *Dockyards and Naval Bases in North America, the Atlantic and the Caribbean* (the 2019 conference).

In spring 2022 we will publish Transactions volume 17, which will be either *Dockyard Workers' Experiences* (the 2017 conference) or *Where Empires Collide: Dockyards and Naval Bases around the Indian Ocean* (the 2020 conference).

**Nicholas Blake, Transactions editor**

### Producing Transactions for online distribution

In 2015 the Committee decided to convert all issues of Transactions into an electronic form so that they could be made available for wider distribution by Amazon as both paperback and Kindle versions. The Kindle version can be read on mobile devices, such as Kindles or telephones, and on tablets and computers. The idea was that these volumes would then be available to a wider audience. Over the next couple of years, we converted two issues of Transactions, namely Transactions 2 and 9. But then the process stalled as doing this proved to be quite expensive using a commercial company and the returns were very small.

2020 was an *annus horribilis* for us all with the coronavirus. But there was a silver lining for the conversion project. With lots of free time and being unable to visit my boat I decided to spend my lockdown time converting all past Transactions into both Kindle and paperback, print-on-demand, versions. The first thing I did was to obtain the electronic files for Transactions 10 onwards. These were the files that had been sent to the printers and therefore converting these was really easy. Nick Blake and Rachel Smyth, of Birdy Book Design, were really helpful there. However, that still left volumes 1 and 3 to 8, which were edited by Ray Riley and for which there were no remaining electronic files. In order to convert them, I had to take my copy of each one to pieces. I then scanned each page separately using the highest resolution my scanner could give. That then gave me a large computer



file which I was able to convert into formats suitable for Amazon. The process of conversion is not 100 per cent accurate so I then had to proofread each one very carefully to find and correct any mistakes. That was enormously time consuming, but lockdown had given me the time to do it. I was then able to publish those issues as books suitable for reading on a mobile device or paperbacks to be printed and distributed by Amazon. As of the middle of January 2021 all of the past issues of Transactions are available from Amazon as both Paperback and Kindle editions. Visit <https://amzn.to/324nhrf> to see the range. However, do please note that the print quality of the original volumes will be better. If you want to have one in top quality do order from our Chair, Ann Coats: 8 Cromleigh Way, Southwick, West Sussex, BN42 4WG [avcoatsndschair@gmail.com](mailto:avcoatsndschair@gmail.com)

Our efforts increased sales of Transactions from 4 copies in 2018 to 111 in 2020.

I am cheered too by the marketplaces we have sold to. Aside from the UK our books have been purchased in the USA, Canada, Brazil, several EU countries, and Japan. Perhaps we are now starting to achieve the goal of getting the message on dockyards out to a wider, more global audience. Each sale generates a small amount of money for the Society but they all add up. Our total earnings for 2020 were £175.

I also found re-reading all of the back issues very interesting and picked up things which I might have skimmed over before. For instance, I saw a letter from the Admiralty in volume 6, 'Surgeons and the Royal Navy'. The letter was dated 1742 and in it, instructions were given to take four women onto the hospital ship HMS *Apollo* in Portsmouth to act as nurses. This predates the establishment of the QARRNS by at least a hundred years and so there were women serving afloat probably two hundred and fifty years ago. Another interesting snippet I found in Volume 5, 'Venice and Malta', was the revelation that the navy of King Charles II operated at least one galley in the Mediterranean and that was in part crewed by slaves. The chorus of 'Rule, Britannia' comes to mind!

David Jenkins

## Meet the Committee: Paul Brown (Secretary)

I was born in Lee-on-Solent, where my father was an artificer in the Fleet Air Arm at HMS *Daedalus*, and was brought up in Gosport. My first memory of the navy is, aged six, going one evening with the family to Stokes Bay beach to see the illuminated Coronation Review fleet at Spithead. I also attended the launch of a *Ton*-class minesweeper at Fleetlands Shipyard, Gosport, some time around 1957. One of my best friends lived in a house at the Navy's Fleetlands Aircraft Repair Yard, of which his father was the superintendent. We used to roam around the yard and I remember on one occasion we climbed to the top of the jib of a huge crane on the harbourside there, which was used to lift aircraft on and off aircraft lighters.

At the age of about ten, like many boys in that era, I was making Airfix models of aircraft and then graduated to making warships. The first was HMS *Cossack*, the Second World War *Tribal*-class destroyer. One morning in October 1960 I cycled down to the Ferry Gardens at Gosport and was surprised to see three *Tribal*-class destroyers entering harbour in line ahead. I believed that all the surviving Tribals had been scrapped soon after the war, but in fact these were ships of the Royal Canadian Navy (I have since visited one of them, HMCS *Haida*, in Hamilton, Ontario, where she is a museum ship). It was this that really kicked off my abiding interest in the navy, warships and dockyards. I attended Navy Days in Portsmouth every year from 1961 to 1968, and was able to roam around all parts of the dockyard. From the grounds of our school, Gosport Grammar, on Stokes Bay, we could see the great liners and warships proceeding down the Solent.

One year a friend and I tried to cycle from Gosport to Plymouth to visit Navy Days, staying at youth hostels. We only got as far as Portland before the Dorset hills defeated us. I did get to Navy Days there in the following year, travelling by train. I also attended Portland Navy Days one year, and attended the commissioning service for a Canadian submarine at Chatham Dockyard, where it had been built. I used to spend quite a lot of time on the Round Tower photographing warships entering or leaving Portsmouth harbour. In those days you could enter the dockyard on the pretext of visiting HMS *Victory* (which was free!). Security was nothing like as strict as it is now, so I would dress a bit

like a dockyard apprentice and then go off-piste in other parts of the dockyard, being careful to avoid the Admiralty Constabulary.

My other hobbies were sailing, photography and hiking. I gave up cycling (too many hills). I thought seriously about joining the navy as an officer cadet but decided to go to university instead (in those days I think it was a binary choice). My first degree was in metallurgy at Sheffield University, and we had to have an industrial placement in each of the long summer vacations. In one of them I worked in the Central Metallurgical Laboratory at Portsmouth Dockyard, which suited me well because I could wander around the dockyard legitimately.

After spending eleven years in production management roles with British Steel (in Corby) I moved into higher education, with a job as a lecturer in operations management and business strategy. This was at Nene College, which later became the University of Northampton, during the time I was there. I eventually became Dean of the Business School. Having already completed an MBA part-time at Warwick University I later completed a doctorate in strategic management development. My move to Northamptonshire became a permanent one as it turned out.

Family and career commitments meant I had little time to pursue some of my hobbies. In the final years of my career, and in retirement, I found time to start researching naval history and writing books (six so far), articles and papers. In 2018 I published *The Portsmouth Dockyard Story* (History Press) and my *Abandon Ship: The Real Story of the Sinkings in the Falklands War* has just been published by Osprey. As well as NDS I am a member of the Society for Nautical Research and the Britannia Naval Research Association.

In the period 2011 to 2020 I lectured on maritime history aboard cruise ships, before the pandemic put paid to that. As well as all the other pleasures of cruising (and having to write a lot of lectures!), this gave my wife Andrea and me many great opportunities to visit ports, naval bases and museums in a host of different countries. Perhaps the most memorable was a visit to Kronstadt, near St Petersburg, in Russia, the traditional home of the Russian Baltic Fleet. By chance our visit happened to coincide with their biggest national holiday, marking the anniversary of the end of the Great Patriotic War (the Second World War). The flag-bedecked streets were buzzing with sailors, veterans, musicians and families, and we were the only foreigners there. The warships in the harbour were dressed over all and everywhere martial music was being played. Our guide told us normally Kronstadt was dead, so we had obviously picked the right day.

**Dr Paul Brown**



## Book Reviews

We are pleased to be able to review several books in this issue.

***Springboard to Victory: Great Yarmouth and the Royal Navy's Dominance in the North Sea and the Baltic Campaigns During the French Wars 1793–1815* by David Higgins**

(Phoenix Publications, 2020, 248 pages (softback), £14.99; ISBN 978-0-9540684-7-9)

In 1793 ancillary naval services were established at Great Yarmouth to support warships engaged in the war on trade between the Baltic states and France and the protection of Britain's east-coast convoys which included colliers. Provision for naval, ordnance and victualling stores was made, and facilities for the care of the sick and wounded, accommodation for prisoners of war and a rendezvous

for raising seamen were organised. Taken together they formed a significant support base which would remain in use throughout the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars.

In 1795 a naval squadron was established for North Sea service, based in the Yarmouth Roads. Yarmouth was directly opposite the Texel, where the main Dutch fleet (by then under French control) was to be blockaded. After Admiral Duncan's victory over the Batavian Dutch at Camperdown in 1797 the support services at Yarmouth were greatly improved, thus allowing the roads to act as the assembly point in 1801 for the fleet under Hyde Parker and Nelson tasked with breaking up the Baltic-based League of Armed Neutrality, which was achieved through victory at the first Battle of Copenhagen.

During the peace of 1802/3 the base was closed, but with the resumption of hostilities it reopened. In 1807 the Treaty of Tilsit created a Franco-Russian alliance and most of the Baltic states became hostile to Britain. With the Baltic again a war theatre the facilities at Yarmouth were greatly expanded. Gambier's fleet assembled there before the bombardment of Copenhagen that year and Saumarez's fleet in the Baltic was serviced there for over four years from 1808.

The author was born in Great Yarmouth and his book brings to fruition years of painstaking research in local and national archives. Well-written and attractively presented, with numerous illustrations, it provides a rare level of detail about the activities in a hostilities-only naval base during the French wars. The first four chapters summarise naval and military operations in the North Sea and Baltic during this period, with an emphasis on Yarmouth's role. Then nine chapters give detailed accounts of the support services, communications and defence, and the final chapter deals with the aftermath of victory and the final closure of the base.

Today a few reminders of this important base survive. Parts of the Royal Arsenal (1807) can be seen on Southdown Road and a cannon barrel from there now sits on a replica gun carriage on the South Quay. At the base of the cliff, below Gorleston's White Lion steps, stands what is known as Duncan's Pump, at the site of one of the spring wells used to supply water to warships in the Roads. The most significant survival is the former Royal Naval Hospital, now converted to domestic residences. Designed by the London architect William Pilkington, it opened its doors in June 1811 but proved to be a costly white elephant, as the war was then nearly over as far as the navy was concerned, and the hospital was only operational for a little over three years. Able to accommodate 500 patients, the highest number at any one time was 77. Another evocation of the events of this period stands on Monument Road, close to the seafront: the Norfolk Pillar was erected in 1819 to commemorate the victories of the county's most famous son, Lord Nelson.

**Dr Paul Brown**

***The Master Shipwright's Secrets: How Charles II built the Restoration Navy* by R. Endsor**

(Osprey Publishing, 2020, 304 pages, £65 (hardback); ISBN 978-1-4728-3838-4)

Many members will be familiar with Richard Endsor's earlier *Restoration Warship* and *Warship Anne*, to which this is a companion volume. Profusely illustrated, it focuses on the design and building of the *Tyger*, which was launched at Deptford in 1681, nominally as a rebuild of the 1647 ship of the same name. As was not uncommon at the time, very little, if any, of the original ship was incorporated into the new ship, but financial restrictions on new builds were overcome because the work was classified as repairs.

King Charles took great interest in shipbuilding and discussed many technical aspects with his master shipwrights, who he knew well. Here the deliberations of Charles in deciding the type of ship he wanted and his relationship with the master shipwrights are detailed, and the other shipwrights' duties such as repairing, rebuilding and refitting ships, controlling their men and keeping up with inventions and innovations are discussed.

The author's beautiful illustrations of the design and construction of the ship include deck plans, internal sections and large external shaded drawings, many of which are reproduced in extended pull-outs, typically three or four pages wide. Two other contemporary Fourth Rate ships of almost identical size are examined in great detail using extant contemporary models and survey data, to provide information on the likely design of the *Tyger*.

The intriguing title of the book alludes to Endsor's investigation into the calculations used by master shipwrights to create and document the complex lines and dimensions of the ship, from



which staffs and moulds could be made and used to mark out and shape the frames and other timbers. The master shipwrights jealously guarded the 'secrets' behind the lines, including the formulae which produced full-scale smooth curves. Documents held in the Bodleian Library give detailed dimensions for a Fourth Rate ship by the Deptford master shipwright John Shish, setting out thirty-nine different dimensions of the hull and listing measurements (to an accuracy of  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch) on the rising and narrowing of the breadth and floor at each of the frame positions. The latter reflected the smooth longitudinal curves of the lines that control the shape of the hull. Shish does not reveal how his dimensions were calculated but Endsor draws from a number of contemporary works to exemplify the different formulae used to obtain these curves.

Data on the radii of the mould sweeps (which show the curves of the frames) are also missing from Shish's account, but could also be calculated using formulae from contemporary sources. With a broad understanding of the mathematics used by master shipwrights to obtain their rising and narrowing lines, the author worked back from John Shish's coordinates, using computer software employed in modern aircraft production, testing dozens of possible formulae to find ones that gave figures close to those of Shish.

The very few draughts surviving from the seventeenth century do not include the new *Tyger*. From his analysis together with contemporary data giving her overall dimensions and other details, his studies of two other Fourth Rates, and the numerous William van de Velde the Elder drawings of the *Tyger* which survive, Endsor was able to reconstruct her draughts. Unusually, the ship incorporated sixteen oar scuttles on each side between the lower deck gunports, for service in the Mediterranean against Barbary pirates.

This leads into the chapter on the building of the new *Tyger*, which includes much fascinating practical information and many illustrations of the making of the moulds and frames, as well as the planking, decks and internal details. The author allows the odd humorous aside: in one illustration we see a shipwright asleep by his work because, we are told, he used a time-saving method. The final chapters deal with the launch, rigging, fitting out, guns and service of the *Tyger*.

The reader is rewarded with many authentic and striking insights into the Restoration navy, its ships and shipbuilders. Enhanced by its large page format, the book is an indispensable addition to the literature of the sailing navy, dockyards and ship construction. The product of ten years' work, and clearly a labour of love for the author, it has been carefully designed and edited to produce a superb volume.

Dr Paul Brown

***British Naval Intelligence through the Twentieth Century* by Andrew Boyd**

(Seaforth Publishing, 2020, 776 pages, £35.00 (hardback): ISBN 978-1-5267-3659-8)

Andrew Boyd's book is a physically and intellectually substantial book, being a comprehensive and impressive history of British naval intelligence throughout the twentieth century. It is thoroughly researched by a former naval officer whose experience has enabled him to assess the developments of the many strands of intelligence, some of which are barely mentioned in many naval history books.

Fisher was one of the first to appreciate the need for a more professional intelligence set up at the Admiralty while he was C-in-C of the Mediterranean Fleet in 1902. With the threat from Germany, a formal Naval Intelligence Department had been set up by 1914. The author shows that signals intelligence (SIGINT), albeit disjointed at times, often gave the Admiralty foreknowledge of enemy ship movements, allowing its ships to be deployed appropriately. As well as the well-known Room 40 codebreaking activity, routine intelligence-gathering on for example shipping movements helped enforce the economic blockade against Germany, especially via neutral ships and countries. From 1917, the effectiveness increased just at the time the U-boats were causing substantial losses to British shipping.

Although as with the fleet there were post-war cutbacks in intelligence, a capability was retained that could assess the threats from Germany and Japan in the 1930s. That framework was built up substantially during World War Two. While many accounts focus on dramatic breakthroughs such as codebreaking at Bletchley Park, the author shows that other techniques were equally important, not just agents and communications monitoring but notably photographic reconnaissance and high-frequency direction-finding in the U-boat war. The Operation Intelligence Centre (OIC) brought these

strands together tactically to give senior officers a good overall picture. Despite some shortcomings, e.g. in Italian coverage, or enemy penetration of convoy codes, this enabled the RN to deploy its limited resources generally to good advantage – unlike the enemy where inter-service cooperation was often poor.

Your reviewer had not previously appreciated just how much of a force-multiplier intelligence could be, for example in the run-up to D-Day and cooperation with the US over Japanese movements. The author reckons that Britain's intelligence effort was the most effective of any Second World War participants, largely due to its successful integration of all sources by experts.

Post-war, the Soviet Union was seen as the major threat, so the emphasis shifted to determining that country's military ambitions, particularly its rapidly increasing submarine force, initially conventional, later nuclear. Intelligence activities were coordinated with the Americans, including submarine surveillance off Russian Arctic bases. Many of the sources of this period are declassified papers in the National Archives, plus an increasing number of books. The book finishes at the end of the Cold War, when the former Soviet Union was regarded as less of a threat and Trident replaced Polaris as Britain's nuclear deterrent.

Extensive endnotes (helpfully headnoted by the relevant chapter page) run to sixty-five pages followed by a bibliography that reveals the depth of the author's researches. Overall the author has succeeded in giving a clear understanding of the many facets of naval intelligence, with well-judged insights and details that will be new to most readers. Highly recommended to any student of the Royal Navy in the twentieth century, which at the start was the world's largest and is still a significant player.

Dr Ian Buxton, Tynemouth

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

### 15 May 2021

Annual General Meeting followed by a lecture by Dr Celia Clark.

Papers will be sent to members well in advance and the meeting will be conducted on Zoom.

Instructions and a Zoom invitation will be issued to members.

### 9–11 June 2022

Joint International Conference at Portsmouth with the Society for Nautical Research, 'Dockyards as modes of naval architecture, maritime traditions and cultural heritage' is planned for 9–11 June 2022 (postponed from 2021 due to the pandemic).

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