Stanley Dockyard 1901 – Storehouse, Smithy. Hulk of Margaret and cruiser HMS Barracouta in harbour. (courtesy: Falklands Island Museum)

Contents of this issue:
Exciting new Dockyard Museum and Development in Falklands

The Dockyard – Origins

In 1842, when Richard Clement Moody stepped off the brig *Hebe* as the first full British Governor of the Falkland Islands, Port Louis was the Islands’ only inhabited settlement. One of the young lieutenant governor’s first duties was to establish a seat of government. He chose the site that would develop into Stanley: the southern side of Port Jackson, an area with ample supplies of fresh water, peat for fuel and a safe anchorage. By 1844 the process of moving the settlement was well underway. One of Moody’s early instructions to his Royal Engineers, sappers and miners was to build a dockyard—a nucleus around which the new capital would take shape. By that winter, Stanley’s buildings consisted of two wooden cottages and another of sods and stone, huddled close to the dockyard, which now featured a carpenter’s shop, a blacksmith’s forge and a storehouse. Several other government buildings and a jetty were added before the end of the decade.

Should he be transported to twenty-first century Stanley, Governor Moody would find much strange about the capital he founded but one place that might be familiar would be his dockyard—with its neatly shingled sore and its smithy squatting solidly on the sea front. Nearly 170 years after the establishment of the capital in 1845, many of the buildings in the dockyard are largely unchanged and with the greatest concentration of listed buildings in the Falklands, it is no exaggeration to say this is truly the historic heart of Stanley.

Britannia House

Since 1989, the museum was located in Britannia House (a Brazilian prefabricated structure brought in during 1981 for use by the Argentinian airline LADE, which operated an air service to Stanley). It provided a charming museum space but became too small for expanding collections and rather too far away from the centre of Stanley for tourists, and it closed in March 2014. We are very excited at the prospect of being able to celebrate Falkland heritage and traditions in the dockyard.

Key points about the new museum

- The museum needed to move nearer to the centre of Stanley where our tens of thousands of cruise ship visitors come ashore—they have limited time to also get out to see the wildlife and the town.
- The new site for the museum at the dockyard is a historic site in its own right—it includes some of the first buildings constructed at the founding of the capital in the early 1840s. Four listed buildings are included in our element of the project.
- The project is part-funded by the Falkland Islands Government while funding for exhibition development to be found by Falkland Island Museum and National Trust (M&NT).
- It will be officially opening at the end of August 2014.

The historic dockyard will bring about an enormous change in Stanley—creating a physical and cultural centre for the town, and serving as a solid foundation for the Islands’ long-term goal of developing a public waterfront that is both beautiful and usable.

Once completed, the dockyard museum will cover just about every aspect of Falklands’ history and life including:

- The history of early settlement
- Our maritime heritage
- Our farming heritage and life in Camp
- Life in early Stanley and the town’s development
- Falklands natural history
- Our connection with Antarctic exploration
- The Falklands War in 1982.

The development of the dockyard as a museum and historic site has wide-ranging and diverse benefits which will continue long into the future—for Stanley and the Falklands’ community in general,
Use of historic dockyard buildings

Storehouse Number 1 (more recently known as the Central Store) has always and will be the key in a series of buildings. The storehouse has changed little since its construction in 1844 and is believed to be the oldest surviving wooden building in the southern cone of South America. The dockyard will allow the M&NT to create themed exhibition areas where the story of the Islands can be told in a setting that is both attractive and authentic. It will serve as an attractor and a focus for visitors to the Islands; a place where the Falklands’ history can quickly and comfortably be explored. Vitaly, this will be a heritage site that is genuinely ‘Kelper’ and reflects the character of the Falklands. The new building was designed specifically to be subordinate to the store and, although built in the vernacular, it does not pretend to be one of the original buildings.

The museum will also house a small lecture room where talks and presentations can be held. This will provide a venue for the museum’s young historians group ‘The PastFinders’ and will also provide facilities for researchers exploring our records and photographs.

The 1848 Buildings Book describes the government smithy as ‘a new stone building... with forge fitted with two forge blocks, two pairs of bellows, two anvils, swaging block and a portable forge. There is a bench with drawer etc’. Many of the original 1840s features and fittings remain and these will be complemented with our large selection of tools and equipment. The plaque marking the beginning of the dockyard project was unveiled by HRH the Duke of Kent in the smithy in November 2012.

Two other buildings are being moved onto the site. The first of these is the R/T Shack: the radio/telephone (R/T) provided a vital link between Stanley and Camp from the 1950s until 1991 when a modern telephone system was introduced. From taking down lengthy store orders to having a friendly chat or dealing with a medical emergency, the operators were patient and polite, with bad conditions and a constant crackle making it difficult to understand incoming calls. However the R/T Station is probably best remembered for the Doctor’s Hour when an on-air surgery was held. Symptoms were described and medication prescribed while most of the Falklands listened in to what was considered some of the best entertainment available! The second building on the move is Hawk’s Nest Shanty from West Falkland. Shanties were a vital part of Camp life providing overnight and temporary shelter for shepherds and others and Hawk’s Nest is a rare survivor from olden times.

The Reclus Hut is an Antarctic refuge hut built in the 1950s on an exposed rocky promontory, Reclus Point, on the Antarctic Peninsula. The Hut, displayed with much of its contents from that time, has been moved from the grounds of the old museum and will now be an internal exhibit.

The jetty and the Margaret hulk

Originally there was the Government jetty constructed in the 1840s and then strengthened using the hulk of the Canadian barque Margaret built at Halifax Nova Scotia in 1836. She arrived in Stanley on 11 August 1850 under the command of Captain D. Till. She was over six months out on a trip from Liverpool to Valparaiso, badly overloaded with a cargo of coal and cannon balls. She had spent two months trying to get round Cape Horn and gave up and limped back to Stanley in poor leaking condition. She was condemned, and before being used in the dockyard served usefully as a coal hulk for many years, including in 1853 coaling the Great Britain, which was en route from Melbourne to the UK. Sadly very little now remains of the Margaret. The jetty head was removed around four years ago and that took most of the old hulk with it. We have kept a few pieces of timber but everything is pretty rotten. At low tide it is still possible to see that there was a ship there but that’s about it.

Leona Roberts, Curator
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Museum on the Move, the Falklands Islands Museum and National Trust, 2014; Condemned at Stanley, John Smith, 1985; Historical Scrapbook of Stanley – John Smith – 2013; Penguin News
A Warm Weekend exploring in Gibraltar

I was glad to visit Gibraltar in late November 2013 and have a good look around. The greater part of the Naval Dockyard was built c. 1900 with three magnificent dry docks and extensive workshops being constructed. The docks are now largely used by Gibdock, a ship repair and refit facility, but close by there is still a small RN presence. The workshops seem to be to a large extent converted to industrial units used by small businesses, but their architectural unity is preserved. Although the docks are a secure area, there is a reasonable view from the public highway, especially a multi-storey car park.

Right on the road are a (decorated) chimney and a clock tower from the early 1900s. Some excellent historic photos of the docks are available from Luis’s fascinating photo shop at 329C Main Street – I made a few purchases and he kept the shop open for me. Unfortunately no public access is allowed to the Dockyard area.

A few hundred yards south from the Dockyard is Rosia Bay, where the water tanks were situated until their sad demolition in 2007, to be replaced by an unattractive block of flats ironically perhaps christened Nelson’s View. Nelson’s fleet used Rosia after Trafalgar and there is a legend that Nelson’s body was brought ashore on its return journey to the UK. Sadly the jetty is in a poor condition as is the victualling yard, a substantial and interesting building dating from 1812. Unfortunately only the entrance gateway is listed and it looks in a rundown condition with Nelson’s View rather proximate and hence overbearing. The elegant Rosia Cottages survive and seem in very good condition. They were formerly occupied by victualling personnel and are in good condition, as was one of the naval hospitals up the hill and converted into modern apartments.

*www.luisphotosgibraltar.com
The new dry docks in Gibraltar, c. 1904 (Luis)

The Gibraltar Museum is well worth a visit particularly perhaps for its excellent twenty-six-foot-long model of Gibraltar in 1865 built by Lieutenant Charles Warren.*  

Richard Holme

I was very glad to be both welcomed and updated by local historians Dave Eveson and Gigi Sene. Gigi sets out her thoughts below.

For twenty-two years we have had the privilege of living in St Vincent House which was, as I understand it, built by Admiral St Vincent around the time the victualling yard and the Rosia water tanks (unfortunately now demolished) were built to service the only harbour at the time in Gibraltar at Rosia Bay from 1799 to 1803. This is the house where, as one version of the story goes, Lord Nelson was brought ashore from HMS Victory after the Battle of Trafalgar and laid in a room known by the Navy thereafter as The Nelson Room.

The water tanks were built as great brick-lined vaulted chambers which collected rain water from

*www.gibmuseum.gi
catchment areas further up the Rock and provided the navy with fresh water down in Rosia Bay. Some of the clay bricks are said to have been brought in from old Roman buildings in Morocco to avoid transporting them all the way from the UK. With the victualling yard right beside the harbour, Rosia Bay was a convenient port at the entrance to the Mediterranean for ships to take on provisions. The water tanks were demolished by the last administration (elected local government) to make way for an affordable housing project against widespread local and international opposition very ably supported by Dr Ann Coats.

The harbour at Rosia Bay has been sadly neglected over the last twenty years and the historic limestone mole is fast disappearing into the sea. The restoration costs are said to be huge and therefore several controversial plans such as a hotel complex, an aqua park and a dolphinarium have been considered and rejected.

The Royal Naval Hospital on the other hand, which was earmarked for demolition by the MoD, now handed over to local government, has been totally restored and rebuilt as a new state-of-the-art mental-health facility which will be the pride of Gibraltar and certainly provide superb surroundings with incredible and beautiful views across the straits of Gibraltar for our psychiatric patients. A truly worthy restoration project.

Gigi Sene

It is satisfying to know that the Royal Naval Hospital has been restored well. When the MoD disposed of its considerable estate of naval properties to the Gibraltar government in September 2004 the Society did not anticipate any negative consequences for historic structures. However, the Rosia Bay Water Tanks were demolished in August 2006 with no archaeological, architectural or engineering survey, Environmental Impact Assessment or compliance with the Gibraltar Government’s 1991 Development Plan, which called for sensitive development to protect Rosia Bay’s heritage. It was a great misfortune that the Naval Dockyards Society was unable to hold its 2004 Conference in Gibraltar, as we might have made contacts to help save the tanks from demolition in 2006.

Gibraltar Rosia Tanks were probably the first water tanks built to store and supply water to the Royal Naval fleet on this scale. They were built 1799–1803 because Admiral St Vincent was staying ashore in Gibraltar and recognized that a reliable water supply and victualling store were required. There were no other British or allied naval bases in the Mediterranean at the time, and Tetuan and Ceuta could not be relied upon for consistent supplies. The brick tanks were a perfect example of sustainable rain-water harvesting used in Royal Naval bases in the Mediterranean and West Indies from the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries, still in working order, with a 1902 Boiler House and Pump House.

Local historian Dennis King had a letter dated 14 March 1804 from William Henry Otway, Gibraltar Yard, to His Excellency Sir Thomas Trigge (Governor 1803–4): ‘the late heavy rains having above half filled the Great Tank at Rosia: I think that His Majesty’s Ships may take water from thence whenever Your Excellency has reason to suppose that there is a probability of the Wells at Ragged Staff becoming dry.’ This facility was therefore in operation eighteen months before the Battle of Trafalgar. Otway also
relayed the dockyard officers’ report ‘that it would require an ex pense of at least seventy Pounds to repair the Pumps Spouts & of the Watering Plan on the Isthmus; besides as they represent the necessity of having some Careful Person constantly to reside on the Spot for the care of the Works, and for whom some sort of habitation must be built.’ Rosia Cottages were built later for the agent victualler.

Rainwater was eventually collected from the Victualling Store roof and stored in the six underground tanks, cut into the cliffs next to the Yard to avoid having to build retaining walls. According to Nicholas Blake’s Steer ing to Glory (Chatham, London, 2005) they held 5,000 tons of water. From MoD drawings seen by Gibraltar architect Robert Matto, the final dimensions of the tanks were:

- Tank Nos. 1–3: 60m long x 4.5m wide x 6.5m high.
- Tank No. 4: 55m long x 4.5m wide x 6.5m high.
- Tank No. 5: 58m long x 4.8m wide x 6.5m high.
- Tank No. 6: 58m long x 7.2m wide x 6.5m high.

According to Gibraltar historian Lionel Culatto, the Rosia Tanks would have provided important information in the history of building construction. He considered that the whole Victualling Yard was worthy to be listed on the following grounds:

1. the buildings were constructed before 1840 – buildings before that date are normally listed just for their antiquity;
2. the buildings are exceptional in themselves being a series of brick walls covering an enormous area. Further research may show innovative use of materials especially hydraulic lime;
3. the type of building is rare in itself, both in Gibraltar and elsewhere;
4. as a victualling yard it is a unique surviving example;
5. subject to further study it could be an important example of a particular architect, whether Samuel Bentham, Boschetti or someone else;
6. the buildings as a whole make an important contribution to the townscape;
7. there are important cultural and/or historical connections with the growth of British naval power from the 1800s onwards;
8. the buildings are an important part of Gibraltar’s naval heritage which stretches back many centuries.

The release of MoD land in 2004 would have allowed affordable housing in sites such as Queensway, Windmill Hill, Europa Point, Eastern Beach or Buena Vista Barracks. Instead, luxury developments were constructed and a unique heritage area at Rosia Bay was destroyed, without even the possibility of residents being able to buy the flats. I was told by the wife of a policeman that they would not be able to afford these ‘affordable flats’. After I visited Gibraltar in February 2006 the Naval Dockyards Society worked with the Society for Nautical Research, SAVE Britain’s Heritage, ICOMOS-UK, Europa Nostra, MEPs and the South District Association to save the Rosia Tanks. However, the British government maintained that this was a ‘defined domestic issue’ and would not intervene. By the terms of the 1969 Constitution local government powers were defined in a ‘List of Defined Domestic Matters’. Despite the fervour of the heritage organizations’ campaign, there existed no political mechanism to halt the destruction.

As Culatto stated in 2006, the need for the Victualling Store to be listed is still an urgent priority.

**MoD Transfers to GOG (Dockyards, 9(1), 8, August 2004)**

Cormorant Wharf (excluding JMDU), all land to north of JMDU existing boundary, Fleet Pavilion, Coaling Island (MSG and Berthing Strip). Where possible MOD to allow GOG access to Coaling Island for GOG’s reprovisioning of small boats.

Airfield MT Section, Shell Hangar, land surrounding Weather Balloon Station, land at Navy W/T Station, Sullage Plant, William’s Way OFD and Orillon Gap Tunnel, subject to MOD guaranteeing future access through Williams Way Tunnel. Britannia House Sewage Pumping Station, Britannia House (land only), GSEC and Bowling Alley Queensway, Cold Store, Coaling Island, Bruces Farm, Inces Farm.

East Side Oil Fuel Depot (in Rock), Eastside Installations including Jetty, to include Dog Leg Tunnel but excluding three tunnelled reservoirs.

Humphries Huts, Queensway Club/Central Hall, Lind House, Rosia Tanks excluding the pump house.

Thompson’s Cottages, Buena Vista, including the cliff face above the site. East Side Water Catchments, North Front Aerial Farm, Aerial Farm mast zone, WSM Stores, Rosia Court, Navy No. 1, 100 car
parking spaces in the existing car park behind Britannia House and the GSEC building. New Aloes, Middle Hill, Chilton Court (32 vacant flats and 80 flats), Sandpits, F Block ONH, Tangier View.

Dutch Magazine to be transferred or when MOD make alternative arrangements to provide medical facilities. RNH May-06 Indicative availability date: to be transferred or when MOD make alternative arrangements to provide medical facilities.

Gibraltar Squadron, Coaling Island, Rock Cottage, St Bernard’s House, Beaulieu House, 19 Scud Hill (including garage), Rose Tree Cottage, The Elms, Lower Elms, Loquat, St Stephens, Mount Barbary, Lancashire House, John Snow House, Suffolk, Surrey, Ex-NAAFI Stores, South Pavilion OMQ, Navy WT Station.

Full reports of the Rosia campaigns can be found in:

Ann Coats

The Admiralty contract

The National Archives at Kew contains a collection of papers that summarize the contract and analyse the work (ADM 106/3546). The contract specifies government to provide 300,000 bricks from Woolwich, the cost to be deducted from the money paid to the contractor; but 70,000 that arrived in August and September 1801 did not last to the end of the year, and 27,300 that arrived in November did not last till the end of the year; so the contractor bought Spanish bricks, which answered much better for the floor and tenas mortar lining. The 1798 contract specified one tank 200ft long, 60ft wide and 17ft high to the spring of the arches, containing 10,462 butts of water, which would be filled by 28in of rain water, and two under the sea line walls, 51ft long x 20ft wide x 8ft high and 30ft long x 20ft wide x 8ft high, together containing 665 butts. I calculated in Steering to Glory that a butt was half a ton (net) but this is not conclusive.

Nicholas Blake

A Successful Greenwich Conference and AGM

Thirty-five NDS members attended the AGM at the National Maritime Museum on 29 March 2014, including many new members. This equalled the record set in 2013. Seventeen non-NDS delegates attended the conference, making a total of fifty-two attendees, one of our higher attendance records (Deptford & Woolwich, 2013, 69; Building Victory, 2009, 75; Portsmouth Dockyard in the Age of Nelson, 2005, 82; Naval Surgeons, 2008, 105). This was due undoubtedly to the calibre of our speakers.

This AGM marked a significant year of new committee changes. Secretary Peter Goodwin has contributed much in contacting new members and attracting conference speakers, and enduring my sometimes conflicting instructions – it took a while for me to change roles. Richard Holme has been brilliant as Newsletter Editor, finding fresh people to write varied articles, and Steven Gray sends out a weekly online newsletter as Social Media Manager. The Committee has agreed to redesign our website in the coming year (the current one is continuing until we switch over) and Steven will then update it.

I am especially grateful to Judith Webberley and Steven for disseminating briefings to members and social media on Wymering Manor Trust, Portsmouth Shipyard closure, Portsmouth’s First Dockyard, Deptford Dockyard Planning Application and Victoria and Albert Rows Bermuda. This boosts the NDS profile and raises awareness of dockyard issues worldwide: if you Google ‘naval dockyards’ we are on the first page. Judith, despite her recent broken ankle, has also continued her sterling work of chasing down our subscriptions, which are the backbone of the Society. She is like a well-behaved terrier. We wish her a full recovery. While our membership is not increasing, due to retirements, we
are attracting new members steadily through our activities, including two of our conference speakers. Judith is also constructing a cumulative index of Transactions, and an index of each volume, starting with Transactions 1. Indexes will be released as they are completed.

David Jenkins as Treasurer and David Hilton as Examiner of Accounts have striven to keep our accounts transparent and funds balanced. We have never had huge sums behind us, but are in a healthy situation this year. Celia Clark continues to raise the profile of international defence sites with Wessex Institute’s 2nd Defence Sites Heritage and Future Conference, Venice Arsenale, 17–19 September 2014. Transactions Editor Philip MacDougall and Ebook Transactions Manager Nicholas Blake are working hard behind the scenes to publish our new format Transactions 9 shortly, and Transactions 10 at the end of the year. Funds permitting, one past Transactions per year will be converted to ebook formats. From volume 9, each future Transactions will be issued as both ebook and print. While the priority is to maintain Transactions as hard copy sales, their contents, abstracts and indexes will appear on the new website as searchable items, to raise hard copy sales.

I am indebted to both the new and the continuing committee members for taking the Society forward in such an effective manner. Their roles interlink and collaborate, just like the Navy Board. Speaking of which, Navy Board Project Coordinator Sue Lumas and volunteers continue to move towards the target of completing the listing at Kew by 2016. She thinks an analysis of the topics is needed, since the Miscellany disguises the breadth of its contents. It would also be useful to survey any gaps in the Commissioners’ and Dockyard Officers’ correspondence. A new member has volunteered to join in online, so that was exciting. If you would like to take part as an online or in situ volunteer, please contact Sue.

The Treasurer proposed a resolution for a reduced student membership. It was unanimously agreed to set the subscription at £10 for students applying via an ac.uk address, to receive digital Newsletters and ebook Transactions. We look forward to our first applicants.

There was a healthy show of hands for the Plymouth and Devonport tour on 5-8 September. We run a tour each year but risk losing money because we do not attract many takers. Numbers vary between 16 and 25. Once people do come they tend to repeat the experience, as it is a great opportunity for behind-the-scenes-tours in unusual places and to meet people who share our enthusiasm. We are also acting as NDS ambassadors in supporting volunteer groups. We asked members what they would be prepared to pay for a long weekend tour, and were told £300–400. We shall cost this year’s tour within this price, focusing on places of most interest that we can access economically. We shall hire a coach for the dockyard and guided behind-the-scenes tours.

After checking in we will spend the first afternoon in the Barbican, to stroll round the historic harbour, browse the bookshops or visit the Aquarium, meeting up for a fish and chip supper. We will have the whole of Saturday in the dockyard with guided tours of the museum, HMS Courageous and the naval base. On Sunday and Monday we will have guided tours of Royal William Yard, the Royal Marine Barracks Stonehouse and the Royal Citadel, departing in the afternoon. One evening we will invite local members to join us.

The Grosvenor Hotel, which is close to the Hoe, was recommended. HMS Courageous is an option, as it is two hours in a confined and not very accessible space. Those who do not wish to go aboard can spend more time in the Devonport Naval Base Museum. Please return your enclosed booking form ASAP so we can confirm numbers to the hotel.

On to the conference: the NMM foyer was greatly enhanced by a display of First World War photographs generously supplied by Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust, Chatham Dockyard Historical Society and NDS members. Our thanks go to Clive Stanley of CDHS, Helen Crowe of CHDT, Celia Clark and Arthur Thorning. You are also directed to Gordon Smith’s Tribute to the British Shipbuilding and Repair Industries 1914–18 including RN Dockyards and Research Establishments.

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* hmscourageous.co.uk/html/the_boat.html
† naval-history.net/WW1NavyBritish-Shipbuild01.htm
Thanks to all the speakers for such stimulating and remarkably complementary presentations. Eric Grove led off as our keynote speaker, giving a virtuoso performance comparing British naval and mercantile production 1905–14 with that of Germany, 41 battleships and cruisers to their 40, examining how work was allocated. A major post-war problem was that a huge British subsidized overcapacity could not be sustained or repeated in the Second World War. He identified that more research needed to be done on dockyard production and German war economy specifics. As expected, he stimulated a diverse debate, resolving that labour was always in short supply but that British industry was geared up to support the navy, but not the army, as a continental war had not been expected.

Ian Buxton then took us through the construction of Rosyth Dockyard, using plans and photographs. He stressed the fact that naval docks had to be constructed more deeply than commercial docks, to allow for damaged hulls. Dunfermline was four miles away, so housing was needed. After showing us its building stages, he illustrated how the dockyard was adapted for its subsequent tasks of breaking up ships of the German High Seas Fleet after it was scuttled at Scapa Flow, referring to the Docking Book. All but SMS Hindenburg were sunk upside down and that was how they were towed and dismantled.

Martin Rogers then followed with some iconic images of Rosyth taken by local photographers and the press, showing houses and docks being built. He has lived there all his life, his parents having moved there from Portsmouth, so has an intimate knowledge of the Garden City, Hut Village, Tin Town or Bungalow City, built to house the workforce. He wondered if an impressive photograph of sailors lined up in Dock No. 3 on 8 July 1915, with the Archbishop of York conducting a service, was the actual opening ceremony – someone observed that they would probably equate to the whole of the present Royal Navy!

After a fine networking lunch Vaughan Michell led us through the evolution of the dreadnought battleship, headed by the impressively named Sir Eustace Tennyson d’Eyncourt KCB, Director of Naval Construction. He evaluated the advantages and disadvantages of deeper hulls, larger guns, sloping armour, oil as a fuel and internal voids. Then Paul Brown examined dockyard activities in terms of physical, human and financial resources. Personnel doubled and their training took six years. Only Portsmouth, Devonport and Rosyth could take dreadnoughts, although there were floating docks at Sheerness and Jarrow. Between 1905–6 and 1913–14 there was a 46.4% increase in dockyard expenditure. First Lord of the Admiralty Fisher improved workflow and introduced short annual refits. While wages increased, so did inflation. Two thousand women were working at Portsmouth by 1914, and Celia Clark described the process of introducing women into the yards via diluting (shorter training) or substitution, to address the personnel shortage. She showed us images of women, then we saw film and heard recordings of women who were in Portsmouth Dockyard in the First World War. They described some of the intricate and heavy work they did, such as winding wire round hose reels, chain testing and block-making, and the pride they took in their work. It was very moving to be taken back to that era by women who were there. Finally, Peter Goodwin led us on a tour of the huge range of
submarines developed during the First World War, their innovations in power, range and torpedo effectiveness, and some dead ends, but the overall success of this new vessel in demonstrating its capability in coastal defence and fleet operations.

The difference in style, content and media made it an enthralling day, with a good mix of human and technical data. I received unanimous praise for the quality of the day. Thanks also to Richard Holme for chairing the afternoon session.

Dr Nigel Rigby, Head of NMM Research, is thanked for his ongoing support for NDS events at the Museum, as are Lizelle de Jager, Research Department Executive, for her hard work in making the arrangements and attending on the day, and Danny Reid for AV support.

Note for your diary: Saturday 18 April 2015 our next AGM and conference: The Dockyards’ Waterloo? The Royal Dockyards & the Pressures of Global War, 1793–1815.

Dr Ann Coats

New solutions for Victoria and Albert Rows, Bermuda Dockyard?

A year ago the NDS welcomed the undertaking by Trevor Moniz, the new government Minister for Public Works, to preserve Victoria and Albert Rows: ‘it is our intention to restore both Albert and Victoria Row properties in due course’. (RG, 24 January 2013) The Minister’s announcement appeared to be a resounding pledge to Bermuda citizens and the international heritage community that he would ensure a new duty of care for the dockyard built environment. However, it seems that ‘Victoria and Albert Row buildings . . . have now been condemned’ and ‘the current [Wedco] Chairman has come to the same conclusion – that those historical buildings are no longer fit for purpose and now they have to be razed to the ground.’ (Owain Johnston-Barnes, ‘MP takes Govt to task on Victoria and Albert Rows’, RG, 17 March 2014)

The NDS first became involved when members visited Bermuda in 2012 and it came to our notice that the dockyard workers’ houses in Victoria and Albert Rows, built in 1846–7 and 1858, were about to be demolished to build a new 100-unit apartment block. Former rows included Portland Place, Clarence Terrace and Marine Terrace, which had been demolished (W. R. Brockman, Bermuda: Growth of a Naval Base, 1795–1932, Bermuda Maritime Museum Press, 2009, pp. 79–80). Jonathan Coad wrote in 2012:

At Bermuda isolation from the main settlements was compounded by the very high cost of local labour. By 1865 Bermuda Dockyard employed more staff than any other overseas base. By then the need for foremen and skilled workmen to maintain the new steam warships had led the Admiralty to provide funds for further houses to be constructed outside the yard and more money was earmarked for additional housing in the mid-1870s. Victoria and Albert Rows form an important element of this official ‘dockyard settlement’. I am not aware of any other former overseas base where the Admiralty provided housing at this time and on this scale for its skilled dockyard workers. This group of buildings at Bermuda is therefore extremely rare. The buildings as a whole form an important element in the architectural, economic and social history of Bermuda. (‘Going. Going. Gone! Obliteration of Bermuda Dockyard Heritage: Victoria and Albert Rows and Ship Crest Paintings’ (December 2012), Dockyards, 17 (2), pp. 12–18)

It appears that listing designations and government promises are not being upheld. The NDS and other international organizations are deeply alarmed that these unique houses will go the same way as Marine Terrace, allowed to decay through neglect, then demolished. Sheerness Dockyard houses were similarly threatened by an inappropriate new development, attracting the attention of the World Monument Fund, which put them on their Watch List in 2010. Their future has been guaranteed by their sale to the Spitalfields Trust, which is renovating the buildings to a high standard.†

* royalgazette.com/article/20140317/NEWS/140319801
† wmf.org/project/sheerness-dockyard
Two linked solutions are possible. One is to give owners tax exemptions and loans. Mr Ming argued in *RG*, 24 January 2014:

If you have a listed building in Bermuda you can get a loan to make renovations or restorations, but they don’t lend the money for very long. We have not promoted the benefits of owning a listed building in Bermuda. Until everyone, from Government to estate agents to the banks, gets on board and everyone understands the benefits of owning a listed building, then it will retain the image of being a burden rather than an asset.

Bermudian Architecture is one element of our art form which is truly indigenous. It is on record the visitors have placed an extremely high value on our traditional architecture which has made their visit here memorable. The purpose of the list is to identify those buildings and to ensure that their special architectural character is understood and protected when future development is proposed. Another is to establish a Victoria and Albert Rows Building Trust, transferring the freehold to the tenants and new owners. It would be much cheaper than knocking them down, open up investment opportunities, and give work to skilled carpenters and masons.

Following the example of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, Building Preservation Trusts, which can apply for grants, have increasingly taken over historic estates in the UK. (Dance, D.

*royalgazette.com/article/20140124/NEWS/140129847*

Even English Heritage will be split into a new self-financing charity by March 2015: one part will manage the National Heritage Collection; while Historic England will run its planning and heritage protection responsibilities. One result, according to Sir John Tusa, former Barbican managing director: it ‘gets subsidies off the Government’s books.’†

NDS urges that these possibilities are investigated.

These homes cannot be demolished without due process. They are listed. As the *Royal Gazette* reported in 2012: ‘These homes are a part of Dockyard history, they are 150 years old and they are solid buildings but more importantly they are family homes.’ (*Victoria and Albert Row residents back project*, *Minister*, 30.5.2012) Albert and Victoria Rows were a unique Bermuda solution to house essential dockyard workers, an amalgamation of British dockyard houses, with ‘necessary’ facilities separated from the main house, and the Bermuda vernacular style, part of the ‘Bermuda Image’. Workers’ houses are as worthy of conservation as the Commissioner’s House. Dockyard historian Jonathan Coad wrote: ‘This group of buildings at Bermuda is extremely rare. The buildings as a whole form an important element in the architectural, economic and social history of Bermuda.’

Once again the Naval Dockyards Society urges that:

1. Bermuda’s listing criteria for the Dockyard Estate, including the Eastern and Western Victualling Storehouses, Malabar House and Albert and Victoria Rows, are followed by the government
2. The provisions of the *Bermuda Plan Planning Statement* 2008 are followed
3. No interventions are allowed on the fabric/context of Albert and Victoria Rows which will detract from their character
4. Wedco creates a Conservation Management Plan for Bermuda Dockyard, funded through its rental income, which specifies a conservation programme for all the buildings in the Dockyard estate according to best international heritage practice and finds appropriate uses to conserve their integrity and ensure their future security.

The NDS emphasizes the crucial concept of sustainable value. Commercial rental value is just one aspect. As significant are the aesthetics of the design and appearance of traditionally constructed houses within their dockyard context and embodied energy contained within houses built by manual labour from locally quarried limestone. Sustainable renovation of these historic houses will restore a tangible built heritage which is unique to Bermuda Dockyard and the intangible heritage of a 150-year-old dockyard artisan community.

Renovation of Albert and Victoria Rows will create tradesmen’s jobs and train young people in essential crafts such as applying lime mortar, transferable elsewhere in Bermuda. A set percentage of WedCo’s rental income should be invested and ring-fenced for refurbishment and maintenance expenditure of its listed buildings. That would address the issue of no government capital being available to protect built heritage assets.

This is the twenty-first century, the era of social media. Electorates deserve transparency and best practice from governments and NGOs. There is no excuse for letting any more of the Bermuda Dockyard estate fall into dereliction when there are tenants and individuals who are willing to renovate it.

After the NDS wrote on 24 March 2014 to the *Royal Gazette*, WedCo and government ministers, Wayne Scott JP, MP, Minister for Community and Cultural Development, replied promptly: ‘From my understanding, these buildings have not been condemned, nor has the current WEDCO chairman scheduled them to be demolished. I believe there is still an effort being made to determine the best way forward.’

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* ihbc.org.uk/context_archive/58/BPT/bpt.html
Intriguingly, a *Royal Gazette* article on 5 April reported:

The West End Development Corporation (Wedco) is seeking Expressions of Interest to develop or redevelop several historic west end sites. In an advertisement in yesterday’s *Royal Gazette*, the quango said it is looking for proposals for Albert and Victoria Rows, Moresby Plain, The Parsonage and Maria Hill.

Submissions for all of the properties are required on or by 31 May. Those shortlisted will be notified by the end of July and asked to make a detailed presentation to the Wedco board.

Wedco chairman Ray Charlton said: ‘We are looking for opportunities for entrepreneurs, businessmen and developers to come out here and look at the properties that are available.’

‘I see Wedco as the economic engine of the West End and we have lots of spaces and buildings available, so we are looking for anyone with ideas to come up and take a look so we can help create new business opportunities and create new jobs.’

Brian Hyde, NDS member and Bermuda ‘Onion’ (relating to the onions Bermuda supplied to America until the 1930s and used for its inhabitants), emailed WedCo on 7 April:

I noted from the Bermuda Royal Gazette (RG) last week that Wedco is seeking ideas by 31st May on the heritage buildings listed – of which some are, I recall, Grade I and thus also of interest to other parties in Bermuda, such as the Bermuda National Trust (BNT) to which I subscribe.

With the track record over many years since 1950 and the sell off (in two phases) by the Admiralty to the Bermuda Government, it is surely evident that without some government-underwritten long-term plan for the whole of West End estate, such as financial seeding, tax incentives, innovative privatisation and rent-free deals for five to ten years, a critical mass of year-round activity will never be created to keep that end of Bermuda viable, in terms of taking up properties such as the Parsonage, the last remaining Terraces, or Moresby House. Some such initiatives would, no doubt, require changes in Bermuda laws, but given the experience of the past, WedCo is not armed with the capability to create the critical mass needed in the area.

. . . it looks as if a new look has to be taken at the West End problem. Developers, normally interested in short term gain, have looked at Bermuda time and time again and walked away. So it looks as if self-help at Government level, with new associated long term innovative planning and investment, is the only way to get things moving for the future benefit of Bermuda as a whole. It is very difficult to see how WedCo’s constrained piecemeal efforts to make use of heritage assets, so long in decay, can result in restoration and re-use.

Thirty years ago Chatham Dockyard closed and some seven thousand persons lost their jobs. Initially the place was a wasteland, just like Bermuda Dockyard, albeit without the pilfering that Bermuda managed to let run. Now there are many elements operating on the ex-Chatham Dockyard estate, including a world-class museum, heritage housing, retail outlets, vast new housing, a critical mass of educational establishments, and so on. This could not have been achieved by the South East England Development Agency (now abolished) alone; it needed much wider support and commitment. The Medway area, within which Chatham Dockyard sits, has about sixty-five thousand inhabitants – which of course is roughly the total population of Bermuda – so economy of scale cannot be compared with Bermuda per se.

Brian has offered WedCo local press articles covering the story of Chatham Dockyard’s recovery over the past thirty years, and continues to monitor the Victoria and Albert Rows situation.

*Ann Coats and Brian Hyde, May 2014*

*royalgazette.com/article/20140405/NEWS/140409830*
Deptford Dockyard – where are we?

Boris Johnson, the London Mayor, has approved the controversial masterplan for redeveloping the site of Deptford Dockyard, nowadays known as Convoy’s Wharf, with some small changes. He ‘called it in’ after Lewisham Council had not concluded its discussions with the Hong Kong based developer, Hutchison Whampoa, and so had not determined the planning application within the statutory sixteen weeks. The scheme drawn up in 2013 by the architect Sir Terry Farrell is somewhat more sympathetic to the site’s history than the previous schemes of 2002 (by Richard Rogers) and 2011 (by Aedas), but still leaves much to be desired from a heritage standpoint.

The scheme continues to provide some 3,500 homes (most of them private), with associated facilities, at a high density, occupying just forty three acres. They will be accommodated mostly in slab blocks, of up to fourteen storeys, and three tall towers, of which the tallest is over 500 feet high and now right on the riverfront, within view of the former Greenwich Royal Naval Hospital, so even more prominent. There will be employment opportunities in a 2.6 hectare ‘protected wharf’ zone at the north-west end, while the Grade II listed shipbuilding shed (Olympia Building) at the centre of the site will be retained for new uses.

Relative to 2011, Farrells have rearranged the layout of plots and circulation routes in a more coherent manner, but still reflecting modern aspirations rather than the long-buried historical layout of the dockyard. There will be narrow internal vistas along canyon-like but tree-lined streets and some longer views and broader open spaces. A tapering vista will now link the shipbuilding shed with the entrance of the former Great Basin, where token patches of water will be created – a small improvement, but it will be crowded in on each side by tall buildings and a clear view will still not be possible from the river. The ground above the former double dry dock at the eastern end will be laid out as open space with historical interpretation, as before, and No. 1 Slipway is now to be treated similarly, with its more durable features displayed where practicable. The foundations of John Evelyn’s house, Sayes Court, would be displayed under cover. Design guidelines include expressing the memories of a few other buried features in the design of paving and so on. The development of the individual plots is to be controlled by abstract parameters such as maximum and minimum building heights, floor areas and the mix of dwellings, rather as in the Kings Cross Central development which is now progressing in Camden. The proposed street envelopes have an overpowering character. Landscaping and other matters are only indicative within this outline planning consent but are intended to be of high quality. The detailed design for the public open spaces will be required to be ‘informed’ by two historic themes, namely John Evelyn and ‘the historic shipyard and dock’ – in the latter is included ‘trade and the history of the site as a gateway from overseas’, presumably in allusion to the post-dockyard period. Water features, choices of materials and art works are among the suggested means to address these.

The foundations for new buildings will be constrained by the Scheme of Archaeological Resource Management agreed between English Heritage and the developer, to preserve in-situ remains. To this end, the sites of some docks and slipways will remain as open space, although their construction is mostly of timber or weak, frost-prone concrete and unsuitable for permanent exposure in general. The extensive archaeological excavations previously reported in Dockyards did find some massive brickwork, as anticipated, which will present some opportunities for display where the surface layers have not already been destroyed by twentieth-century warehouse foundations. The excavations did however remove considerable quantities of archaeological material after recording, so that large areas are now coloured green and presumably clear for piling works on a plan within the application documents (Design and Access Statement, p. 59). The as yet unexcavated areas will require further archaeological scrutiny before deep foundations can be made.

Before the call-in, several of Lewisham’s ongoing concerns related to heritage – the hemming-in of the Olympia building and the isolation from it of other heritage features by intervening high buildings; the ignoring of the long destroyed but once iconic Sayes Court Gardens, on the south edge of the site; and the local campaign to recreate the later seventeenth-century warship Lenox in the manner of the Hermione project at Rochefort. The campaigners at first envisioned this taking place in the Great Double Dock, suitably reinstated, but now regard one of the covered slipways inside the Olympia Building as a more suitable site, with a Basin recreated in front of it. 3,500 dwellings should indeed be able
to finance a more generous heritage provision than has been offered, although space is tight. In response to vigorous campaigns, the Mayor has added conditions to the outline planning consent, which include that a workable alternative scheme shall be devised for the Sayes Court Garden, and that the developer must fund a feasibility study into the ‘Build the Lenox’ project, so as to produce clear options on how it can be incorporated into the regeneration scheme, and then contribute towards the business case of whichever of these options is most feasible.

The documents for the application DC/13/83358 are on Lewisham’s website at http://planning.lewisham.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&key-Val=_LEWIS_DCAPR_69913.

Details of the Mayor’s decision under case reference D&P/0051c are at http://www.london.gov.uk/priorities/planning/public-hearings/convoys-wharf.

Visualization of proposed scheme from Greenwich

Farrell’s masterplan

Masterplan overlaid on historic dockyard structures and Sayes Court Garden

Malcolm Tucker, 19 April 2014
From the Navy Board

ADM 106/1254
7th July 1779

Robert Wadington of Surreyside, Westminster Bridge, to the Board

Memorial of Robert Wadington, Teacher of Mathematics. It is now 18 years since your memorialist began to make Azimuth compasses upon an improved plan. He having seen so much of the defects of Dr Knights in his voyages to and from St Helena in 1761, since which time he had been making his study how to make and improve the Azimuth Compass so that it might be usefull in the worst of weather, for which purpose he has made various sorts and various alterations from time to time, and made trials both in the River and at sea and at last has brought them to the perfection, as per certificate of the Masters Attendant of the dock yards of Portsmouth and Plymouth and some others, particularly Sir William Burnaby who has had one of them upon trial at sea upwards of 3 years. Also your memorialist hopes you have had some favourable accounts from the Officers the 3 compasses were sent by this Honourable Board.

Gentlemen considering the long time, multiplicity of trials, alterations and expence attending the same and having brought them to perfection, so as to be used on Board his Majesties Ships to great advantage, your memorialist therefore humbly hopes for your Honours recommendation to the Board of Longitude so that he may be revealed for the same as it may merit. July 7th 1779.

Foldover: No reports have yet been received of the compasses from the Captains of the ships were supplied with them.

Sue Lumas

Ghosts Galore at Chatham

On a cold dark night just before Christmas, Barry and Louise started their ninety-minute tour in front of the 1704 Commissioner’s House, allegedly Britain’s fifth most haunted property. We heard inter alia of the spirit of a pregnant servant girl who hanged herself on an attic cord and three children seen staring out at the rear garden... and leaving fingerprints on window sills

It was Christmas party time at the Commissioner’s House so ghosts were hard to imagine or were no doubt scared away by the noise so we were glad to retreat to the dark damp area around the Ropery. Many films have been shot here ranging from Les Misérables to James Bond. We heard of the bobbin boys playing tricks (as they did in real life) on hapless guests overnighting in a camper van and the sound of invisible horses.

Dockyards historically were very much male-dominated so we were surprised to hear that the most commonly seen spirits at Chatham were animals, children and women in that order. Maybe they were unduly stressed when surrounded by the male sex.

The most memorable story was undoubtedly that of the headless drummer boy, sixteen-year-old Royal Marine George Stock whose throat on 30 June 1972 was cut by an older marine, James Tooth, probably due to a dispute over money. Stock survived for an hour before succumbing, the legend is that his murderer decapitated him and threw his torso in the Medway and crammed his head in his drum and walked out of the Dockyard with it. The truth is not quite so bizarre. Stock and Tooth maraud next to the Ropery looking for each other!

We finished inside the marvellous quarter-mile-long Ropery, the lights were turned off and we heard of spirits ringing communicating bell ropes and of orbs appearing in flash photographs.

The tour promised ‘tales of history, mystery, murder or intrigue’ and it was good to see the Dockyard buildings at night – contact ghostwalks@cdht.org.uk.

Richard Holme and Sue Daniels
Harwich International Shanty Festival

Each year on a weekend in October, the small Essex town of Harwich rings with the sound of sea songs and shanties. Now in its ninth year, the Harwich International Shanty Festival has grown enormously in size and popularity and the festival now attracts acts and audiences from across the world. The festival is truly international with regular appearances from shanty crews from France, Germany, The Netherlands, Denmark, Poland, Ireland and even Canada. Begun by members of the nearby Walton on the Naze Shanty Crew, the ancient and historic port of Harwich provides an ideal backdrop for the festival and the compact nature of the old town means that visitors can always find somewhere to go and something to see within a short walk. The people of Harwich have taken the festival to its heart and the festival is now an integral part of the annual calendar for the town. Many local venues are used for concerts, workshops and singarounds. Most of the pubs in the town host sessions as do a number of the restaurants. The wonderful Redoubt Fort sees workshops, shanty singers, street theatre, maritime crafts, Napoleonic re-enactors and the odd pirate. The acoustics of the fort are superb, a joy to sing in and one cannot help but be enthused by the sense of history.

Each year brings new experiences to the festival with trips and concerts on board the Thames Barge Victor, magic lantern shows, Boats with legs and performances of Folk Opera, to name but a few. Last year 2013, saw shanty trains running from nearby Manningtree to Harwich. This proved to be a very successful venture enjoyed by the passengers and the shanty crews who provided the entertainment on the trips. It was rumoured that a few pirates managed to get on board too! 2014 sees plans for a wider than ever range of workshops, a musical play about the Cutty Sark and performances of Treasure Island as Robert Louis Stevenson never imagined it.

As a result of the festival Harwich now has its very own shanty crew, and local author Kate Worsley was so inspired by the festival that she wrote a novel, She Rises, centred around the old port.

Running a festival such as this is almost a full time job now and as soon as one year’s festival is completed the small but dedicated team begin preparations for the next one. Fund raising is always a problem. Sponsorship is hard to come by and so many chase so few grants. As organisers we try to raise as much money as we can by running various, fun and interesting events. Last year we held an auction, the year before we held a shanty marathon to coincide with the Olympics. We aimed to sing continuously for 26 hours and sing 385 songs (a marathon is 26 miles 385 yards). We failed miserably! We managed the 26 hours but sang 412 songs – almost a lap of honour! New Year 2014 saw a town trail /treasure hunt to raise funds. It was well attended and a lot of fun. Every year we ask visiting artists to donate a track to a festival CD which is then sold to raise funds. We also produce the usual merchandise including T shirts and badges.

Local businesses are very supportive donating money, providing venues etc. The festival brings trade to the town at an otherwise quiet time of year, filling the guest houses, pubs, hotels, restaurants and shops and providing an income to a variety of other traders, following a deliberate policy to ‘buy local’ wherever possible. You can even tour the local brewery, sampling the excellent ales whilst the sounds of shanties echo in your ears.
Clockwise from top left: Hooks and Crookes from Waterford in Ireland; Golden Rivets singing on the Halfpenny Pier; Shanty group Storkejaender from Denmark; splicing rope workshop; Inner State Theatre wandered the town reliving the battle of Trafalgar; the lightship, venue for the final mass shanty on Sunday afternoon.

If you would like to come and help at the festival email us on info@harwichshantyfestival.co.uk, or visit the website at harwichshantyfestival.co.uk

2013 was a remarkable year for the festival, by far the most successful in terms of visitors and participants, we published our own shanty book of songs and ran a most successful project with the local primary schools. Members of the committee visited the local primary schools and ran assemblies on sea shanties. The schools were then invited to write their own shanties which were recorded on CD and in a book of their songs. The project was a great success. An open air concert took place at Saturday lunch time with hundreds in the audience. The children were fantastic, the resulting book and CD will provide lifelong memories for the children and the project has helped cement the festival further into the local community.

2020 is the four-hundredth anniversary of the voyage of the Mayflower to the New World. Many places lay claim to the Mayflower but . . . her master, Christopher Jones, hailed from Harwich. Indeed a plaque suggests he lived halfway up a wall opposite the Alma Inn!! The Mayflower also came from Harwich. A replica of the famous ship is under construction in Harwich and the festival has close ties with the Mayflower Project. This year we have asked visiting artists if they would write a new song on the theme of Christopher Jones and the Mayflower with the intention of producing a CD and song book of their works. The new songs will be presented to the world at a special concert held at the
Mayflower Project headquarters over the festival weekend. Local schools will be involved once again, this year producing art/drama/creative writing and their work will also be showcased at the festival.

90-minute river cruises on board the Victor are a most popular attraction.

Entertainment on board the Victor.

Further details can be found on the festival website. Or, if I have got you interested (even a little) why not visit us yourself? This year the festival runs from Friday 10 to Sunday 12 October. Become a friend of the festival, buy last year’s CD or the schools booklet and CD, all of which are available via the website. Come and sample a little bit of our maritime history in the delightful old port of Harwich. See you on board the Victor in October?

Ian Roper

The Number One Dock in Cospicua, Malta

Past, Present and Future

Historic context

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the British took over the administration of the Maltese islands after the two turbulent years of French occupation. The British inherited from the Order of St John three important naval sites that had served for the Knights’ ship-repairing, ship-building, and ship-fitting operations. The one in Birgu or Vittoriosa, the Galley Arsenal, was not suitable for the vessels of the Royal Navy and, after a brief spell serving as stores, the buildings were demolished and replaced by the Naval Bakery, which today houses the Maritime Museum. The focus of the dockyard operations thus moved out of Birgu to the site of the wet dock in the south-eastern corner of the former ‘Porto delle Galere’, or Galley Creek, which was renamed in British colonial times as the Dockyard Creek. It was on the site that the Admiralty undertook in 1844–48 to construct the first dry dock, which is still to this day referred to as the Number One Dock.

Cospicua (or Bormla as it is known to locals) evolved during the early years of the Order’s rule, after the outward growth of Birgu had been curtailed by the construction of the landward fortifications. This settlement was a perennial concern to the Order’s military engineers as it was without any form of physical defences — a state of affairs which persisted until the 1640s with the building of the Margerita lines. Part of the settlement of Cospicua impinged upon the head of Galley Creek and shipping activity, in various forms, was one of the main sources of livelihood to the inhabitants of the town. The knights had built a series of large magazines further inland towards the neck of Galley Creek. Along the north-west shore of the Galley Creek, once the Port of the Galleys, lie the galley houses in which were kept the ships of the Order. Over the entrance leading to the magazine is the names of its one-time occupants: Nave S. Giuseppe M., Nave S. Giacomo, Nave S. Katerina, Nave S. Giovanne. The magazines were built of local hardstone, had an internal height of two storeys and were roofed over with stone vaults. The facade had arched openings with overlying rectangular windows at a higher level to
admit natural light. The magazines were internally interconnected. During the British period an additional floor was added to house the sail loft which ran the entire length of the facade but had a restricted depth. Originally the magazines had adjoining stores which were more restricted in depth and which continued all along the quays up to the Macina building.

The British Admiralty architect William Scamp was responsible for the design and supervision of the construction of the Number One Dock. In 1841 Scamp had accompanied Captain R. E. Brandreth, Director of Engineering Works to the Admiralty, on a visit to Malta to report on the physical state of the naval facilities. Scamp stayed in Malta for four very eventful years, during which period he was actively involved in three major projects: the construction of the Number One Dock, the naval bakery in Birgu and St Paul’s Anglican cathedral in Valletta. Scamp had proposed that the ideal location for the dry dock would be at the head of the Dockyard Creek. Here in his opinion there was sufficient space both for the new dock and the ‘coal vaults, spar and timber sheds’ together with an engine house for pumping machinery that he planned should be constructed along the north-east and south-west sides of the dock. Just as important was the fact that this site permitted future expansion as there was adequate space for ‘buildings that may hereafter be required’.

The local residents of Cospicua had initially protested against the proposed location of the dockyard as it would deprive them of the only direct access to the creek. In 1841 they petitioned the British Governor, Henry Bouverie, against the construction of the Dry Dock. Needless to say, this was in vain. The petition was rejected and works on the project proceeded without undue delay. On 28 June 1844, an elaborate ceremony was held to lay the foundation stone of the new Dry Dock. Robert Clement Sconce, secretary to Admiral Sir John Duckworth, in anticipation of the event wrote the following note:

The first stone of the new dock itself is to be laid tomorrow. It is to be an imposing ceremony. The Governor is to be chief mason. Hanmer ought to be here with his apron; and Sir L. Curtis has invited 280 people to be present and to breakfast afterward (at three o’clock) under our colonnade where a table is laid half the length of the marina, with canvas and flags spread out to keep out the sun — but they won’t keep it out; and you remember what our marina is on the 28th of June, from three to six in the afternoon — it is a furnace.

The report in the local paper, The Times, on the laying of the foundation stone provides us with several insights on issues pertaining to the Anglo-French rivalry, Freemasonry, Scamp’s achievements, his relations with the locals, and the nature of the opposition to the project. The report states that ‘We are convinced that the importance of this work has never been sufficiently appreciated in this Island. By the native population certainly it has not; for when the plan was originally proposed, in perfect ignorance of the immense advantages, local and general, which such a work is calculated to confer, the inhabitants of Burmola memorialized the Government against the construction of this Dock; and interested individuals have not been found wanting since in throwing little impediments in the way.’

The report also praises the government for having selected an individual so ‘qualified as Mr Scamp is to carry out superintendence of this great work. Not a single impediment has taken place in all the multifarious and difficult details of such an undertaking as this.’ Some years later, before the dry dock was finished, the Prince de Joinville, the son of the late Louis Philippe, king of the French, paid it a visit and after speaking of its construction in terms of admiration, exclaimed, ‘Ah well: you are doing all things for us, as we mean to have Malta again before long.’ This was not to be and the new dock developed the area into a major industrial zone as war steamers were repaired. The dock provided numerous employment opportunities to the locals and gave the streets of Burmola an ‘active and business-like appearance’.

Prior to the commencement of works, Scamp had during an inspection on site determined that although the bedrock of the creek was sound, it would be necessary to have considerable amounts of mud removed, ‘the soil between the water and the rock [being] of a very poor description’. To facilitate this, a dredging machine that was ‘generally in use in this creek’ was successfully employed in the excavation and transportation of material from the site. The dock itself was constructed with the aid of a cofferdam, formed out of timber sheeting driven into the bedrock. Detailed drawings by Scamp indicate that the actual construction comprised a series of successive layers of graded stonework with
strata of inferior third- and second-class local stone placed diagonally to create the curved profile of the dock. This stone substructure was then overlaid with stepped coffering in local hardstone lining both the dock and the paving along the quay.

It appears that William Scamp was very much involved in the day-to-day management of the project. In August 1843, he wrote to his superior, Rear Admiral Lucius Curtis, to report that the police had stopped the appointed contractor from continuing to extract deposits of clay. He stated that ‘about half of the quantity of clay required for the Coffer Dam having been supplied from the neighbourhood of St Paul’s Bay’, an additional ‘about 200 or 300 boatloads’ were required to enable the contractor to complete the works. The admiral duly intervened and requested the Chief Secretary, Sir Hector Grey, to secure the necessary police permits to continue extracting clay.

The Number One Dock was first opened on 5 September 1848, when a British vessel of war was refitted at Malta for sea service. It was then reported that ‘the drydock for repairing ships is capacious enough to hold the largest man-of-war. The arsenal near it is well-stored with everything necessary for the fleet, and the dockyard finds employment for a large number of hands. The naval bakery opposite is one of the most complete and extensive in the whole world, and is capable of turning out some tons of biscuits a day.’ The dock was soon deemed to be of insufficient size as ships got unexpectedly bigger and was in a few years later extended inland to double its original length and to be able to accommodate larger steam ships.

Manuscript plan showing the building block ‘Corps de Magazines’ along one of the quays within the Porto delle Galere or Port des Galeres. (Archives of the Order of St John, National Library, Valletta)

A lithograph by the Schranz brothers entitled ‘MALTA – A view of the Dockyard from Burmola’, 1843.
Scamp planned a number of workshops that were usefully positioned alongside the dock, far enough away to provide a dockside working area while close enough to allow easy movement of heavy items. Over the years, the workshops increased both in size and sophistication. Scamp proposed a series of ancillary workshop and store facilities to complement the dry dock. This included a two-storey central block which accommodated a platers’ shop (punching, shearing, turning and boring). On each side of the central block there was a smithery, one serving the Department of the Shipwrights and the other the Department of Engineers. Adjoining the inner smithery was also a small foundry. On the other side of the dry dock was a long and narrow block accommodating the so-called ‘Open Working Sheds’. Scamp opted for a compact and regular arrangement that expedited operations around the dry dock.

Left: Late 19th century view of the Number One Dock showing the Smitheries and Platers’ Shop Block (destroyed during the Second World War). In the background is the parish church of the Immaculate Conception, Cospicua (Bormla). (Courtesy: Richard Ellis Collection)

Right: Portrait of William Scamp with dividers in hand over a map of Valletta and the Three Cities. (Courtesy: The National Fine Arts Museum, Valletta)

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Admiralty consolidated its presence and built several other supporting facilities which formed an integral part of HM Victualling Naval Yard and the environs of the Number One Dock. In front of the church of St Teresa, Bormla, there was a public landing place which provided the only public access to the inlet. Along the quay known as Oil Wharf there were several storehouses including the oil shed and an acid store, whilst on the other side of the public landing along Machinery Wharf, there was the extensive Electrical Engineers’ Fitting workshop. None of these stores on this side of the dock exists today as they were totally destroyed during the Second World War.

Regenerating the Number One Dock – Quo Vadis?

Following the definitive closure of the Malta dry docks by the state agency responsible for the management of the docks, the Number One Dock had for the past fifteen years lain in a state of virtual abandonment. It was disused, walled-in, and hived-off from the rest of the city. This was a source of consternation to local residents as the dock was both physically and visually inaccessible. Some years
ago the government announced that the Number One Dock would be rendered accessible to the general public and that it would be integrated within a major regeneration urban project that envisaged the creation of a unified landscaped waterfront that would connect the individual waterfronts of the Three Cities. However, a number of unfortunate circumstances conspired to sabotage the implementation of this project. The Italian contractor who had won the tender to execute the EU-funded project unceremoniously abandoned work and for several months there was what appeared to be an interminable hiatus with the extensive site having the semblance of an open-battlefield peppered with dangerous pitfalls. There were gusty winds, swirling clouds of dust, frustrated pedestrians and drivers navigating physical obstacles, further compounded with some well-publicized accidents where some elderly local residents sustained injuries, and it was quite justifiable that the local residents were up-in-arms and marched in protest about this state of affairs.

Thankfully, the regeneration project has in recent months resumed and has gained momentum. Part of the landscaped public garden and waterfront promenade flanking one side of the Number One Dock has been completed and is now totally accessible to all. The designers of the landscaped promenade have included elements from the industrial heritage of the dock, a boiler painted in bright yellow, a manual capstan set, and weathered timber slipway sleepers which have been re-arranged as informal benches. The promenade is infused with reminders of the collective memory of the place as a maritime dockyard town.

Works are still in progress on the restoration of the dock itself as efforts are being made to reinstate the original configuration of the inner dock, which had in modern times been insensitively altered. A lot of restoration work still needs to be undertaken on both the British-period and knights’ buildings flanking the other side of the dock. This is a challenging endeavour as over the years particularly in the post-Second World War period the buildings were not treated well, the stonework on the external facades is in some areas severely deteriorated and requires major intervention.

For the local community of Bormla/Cospicua the regeneration of the Number One Dock and the related waterfront landscaped areas is proving to be a significant impetus to attract private investment to the area and to make it more attractive as a tourist destination. A new cafe across the road aptly named Number One Dock cafe is testimony to a renewed sense of pride amongst locals. Identifying appropriate compatible uses for the historic dock buildings once restored would be critical for the success or otherwise of the project. Beyond the challenges of the actual restoration works, the key to unravelling the potential of the area is to establish new uses that are both economically viable, relevant and sustainable in today’s contemporary society. One hopes that this project finally signals the renaissance of Cospicua, a long-suffering community which since the ravages of Second World War has in spite of its illustrious history struggled to retain its resident population and to keep up the pace with other historic towns in Malta.

Brooklyn Navy Yard

"New York City real estate is a canvas that is never quite finished – its landscape and skyline are constantly been redrawn." (Toy 2011).

Brooklyn Navy Yard was founded in 1801. For a hundred and sixty-five years, it served as America’s premier shipbuilding and repair facility, building renowned warships such as the USS Arizona and USS Missouri. At its height, in the Second World War, 70,000 people worked there. In 1966, the historic facility was decommissioned, a devastating blow to Brooklyn’s economy.

It was reopened by the City of New York in 1969 as an industrial park. As the City’s appointed management team, the Brooklyn Navy Yard Development Corporation (BNYDC) rose to the challenge of developing the large-scale military installation into a national model for urban industrial job creation and cutting-edge green infrastructure investments. It has been forty-five years in the remaking. It has over forty historic structures and three City landmarks in three hundred acres.

The long effort to develop the Yard for diversified industrial use has blossomed into a recognizable new asset for the City, and anchored Brooklyn’s manufacturing in traditional and innovative new industries. Practical lessons learned from this base realignment serve broadly as a model for urban areas that need to reinvent themselves and are ready to embrace a new industrial economy.

BNYDC leases out space in the Yard, promotes local economic development, develops under-utilized areas and oversees modernization of aged infrastructure. By 2014 there were twelve new or adaptively reused green industrial buildings. Historic buildings: Building B and the Timber Shed have found new uses.

Building 92 on Flushing Avenue, the former Marine Commandant’s house, has gained an elegantly sustainable addition which houses the Brooklyn Navy Yard Centre – see www.bldg92.org, the first publicly accessible facility. This is an excellent museum about the Yard’s history and modern innovation from the Revolutionary War to the modern products and services now active there.

Today, the Yard is home to over 300 industrial businesses employing nearly 7,000 people. The Navy Yard’s forty buildings have been 99% leased for nearly ten years. As a result of this record of success, the Yard is under way with the largest expansion since the Second World War, adding two million square feet of new industrial space.

Still awaiting reuse is the splendid neoclassical granite Naval Hospital in Sing Sing c. 1836 and its

* http://brooklynnavyyard.org, accessed 6 March 2014
associated buildings, where important medical innovations were developed. Funding for reuse as a media campus has still to be raised. The bodies in the adjoining historic cemetery have mainly been removed.

Interior of building 128/123/28 in the Brooklyn Navy Yard, New York; built 1899–1900 to house a variety of uses including machine shop, boiler-makers, coppersmith and tool-shops. (Photo: Catherine Fast, RIBA)

Charlestown Navy Yard Boston

Thirty-five acres for the Charlestown Navy Yard were purchased in 1800 and the yard was established shortly after, one of the six original naval shipyards in the United States. Over time, the area was extended by landfill to eighty-three acres. The first US ship of the line, USS Independence, was built there. The British landing place for the Battle of Bunker Hill in 1775 is marked with a plaque. In the 1830s a tidal flat was filled in behind a new seaway and two covered slips and a large ship hall were built. In 1833 the frigate Constitution was constructed in the first naval dry dock in New England, designed by prominent civil engineer Loammi Baldwin Jr. In 1975 the historic Constitution floated out of the dock – the last commissioned vessel to use the facility.

Timber sheds, a mast house, ropewalk, sail lofts and wharves crowded the yard. Steam, and later electricity, further transformed the yard. Machine shops, a forge and foundries now served a navy made of steel. Hemmed in by river and town, the yard pushed into the harbor with piers, railways and cranes (Onsite interpretation).

From its opening in 1837, the impressive granite ropewalk supplied cordage for the navy until the Yard closed in 1974. Although primarily a repair and storage facility until the 1890s, when it started to build steel ships for the ‘New Navy’, the Yard was widely known for its leadership in technical innovation. In the early twentieth century, a second dry dock was added. During the Second World War, it repaired damaged British ships and built Liberty ships and Captain class frigates as Lend-Lease for the Royal Navy. World War II ships were modified for Cold War service.

After the Vietnam War the Yard closed and when ideas for redevelopment were being discussed, one proposal was to convert it into a construction yard for oil tankers. This would presumably have meant the loss of most of the historic buildings. The Yard had, however, already been designated a Registered National Historic Landmark by the Department of the Interior in 1966. Instead, Congress established Boston National Historical Park, which includes thirty acres of the historic Charlestown Navy Yard, which was transferred to the National Park Service. Its mission is, ‘to interpret the art and history of naval shipbuilding.’ Part of the yard remains in operation to support the USS Constitution. The USS Cassin Young 793, a destroyer of 1943 which is open to the public, is in the fully commissioned
Drydock No. 1. This is still used for ship maintenance, mostly on historic vessels.

The Yard is near the north end of the Freedom Trail and is seen by thousands every year. The MBTA Water Shuttle linking to the city centre stops at nearby Pier 3, and provides easy visitor access to the Yard. The Commandant’s House on a hill overlooking the yard may be hired for weddings and corporate events, which unfortunately precludes general public access.

After sitting dormant for many years, the remaining hundred acres are being redeveloped in mixed use: medical research, offices, a hotel (the Constitution Inn), new blocks of flats and houses, a public park and a yacht marina. The sites of the covered slips – 210 feet long and six storeys high – are marked out with granite blocks. Drydock 5 of World War II has been filled in. High-quality paving and avenues of mature trees enhance the serious and purposeful atmosphere of the new life of the Yard.

The impressive 1950s storage Building 149 now houses a large medical research institute linked to Massachusetts General Hospital. It houses a Cyclotron & Nuclear Pharmacy, Harvard University Employees Credit Union, autism research and a Center for Biomedical Imaging. Its canteen, like all this part of the Yard, is open to the public.

The Captain’s Quarters at the end of the site now house the Inland Underwriters Agency, the office for International Special Risk and the Massachusetts General Hospital Children’s Center. This end of the yard is almost overhung by a gigantic bridge.

Right at the end of the site is Building 114, the Navy’s Spar Shed and Sawmill of 1900, on the site of the original Masthouse and Spar Shed which was burnt to the ground. It was primarily used for boatbuilding until the closure. It has now been converted to an office and conference centre, not open to the public, but a public right of way through it allows access to the river and a small park with the huge bandsaw visible in reinstalled outside. Right at the end of the site, the Navy Yard has a new neighbour, the huge Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital.

Not all the historic dockyard buildings outside the National Historic Park area have found new uses. The Steam Engineering Building No. 42 survives as a skeleton. This impressive building was offered for lease, and the ropewalk has been empty for many years.

The most desirable and valuable part of the site, the waterfront, has been redeveloped with modern residential development, yachting facilities, a marina, the Seaport Academy and open areas – mostly with open access. A large unused area extends to the harbour in front of the largest new residential block.

Conclusion

Washington, Philadelphia, Brooklyn and Boston navy yards have found new life in very different ways. Philadelphia and Brooklyn continue the tradition of technological innovation via the creation of new jobs and enterprises. Creative public/private partnerships and financing have made this possible. The innovation and enterprise demonstrated in these impressive examples of reuse have much to teach – particularly in countries such as the UK where naval strength continues to diminish, but housing is the most profitable option when sites are sold to the highest bidder.

Dr Celia Clark

(The first part of this article covered Washington and Philadelphia Yards and was published in the Summer 2012 issue of Dockyards Volume 17 no 1)

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Meet the Committee – Nicholas Blake

Nicholas is the committee member for e-publications. He works at Pan Macmillan, where he helped set up the ebook conversion programme, with special reference to formats, procedures, and metadata; for the NDS he has helped produce Dockyards in ebook formats for distribution and download and is helping with the conversion of Transactions for sale through Amazon and all major retailers.

In his naval life he is the author, with Richard Russell Lawrence, of The Illustrated Companion to Nelson’s Navy (Chatham, 1999); written when the interest in Patrick O’Brian was at its height it is a guide to the details of everyday naval life. If you wondered what, for example, a dinner of three courses with four removes was served in the French style, there was an explanation, watercolour illustrations by Richard Lawrence, contemporary recipes with metric measurements, and references to the master’s novels. Since then he has become particularly interested in the household economy of the sailing Georgian navy and his second book was Steering to Glory, A Day in the Life of a Ship of the Line (Chatham, 2005), which while drawn entirely from the historical record takes a fictitious 74-gun ship in the Mediterranean in 1810 through a twenty-four-hour-day, deck by deck. While most books on ‘Nelson’s Navy’ describe what everyone did as their duty, this is the first to show what they did all the time and to fit together a coherent picture of the world inhabited by 550 men in 1615 tons of floating England. It also unwrites some of the Victorian myths of the sailing navy perpetuated by the heavily edited memoirs by drawing on unpublished sources, especially court martial records. It also contains, in edited form, a report compiled for the Admiralty by Captain Bayntun of the Milford, then in Basque Roads three days out from Plymouth, entitled ‘An estimate of [the weight of] every Article used in the Equipment of His Majesty’s Ship Milford when Victualled and Stored for Channel Service’, itemized and particularized.

In 2013 he published an appendix in Sam Willis’s In the Hour of Victory: The Royal Navy at War in the Age of Nelson (Atlantic) that details the prizes taken in the fleet actions of the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars – their construction, armament and fate, the prize and head money awarded, and so on. His most recent publication is ‘The wardroom mess accounts for HMS Leyden (64), 8 April to 19 August 1809’ (The Mariner’s Mirror, 99:4, 444-454), a transcription of one version of the complete wardroom accounts for HMS Leyden, a 64-gun ship-of-the-line, from 8 April to 19 August 1809, from her fitting out in Sheerness and the embarkation of the Light Infantry of the Foot Guards to her participation in the Walcheren Campaign. The accounts are those of the mess caterer, Captain John Spearing RM, and annotated by the purser, and are held at the National Archives, Kew, as enclosures with the minutes of his court martial for embezzling part of the mess money entrusted to him.

He is presently working on The Royal Navy’s Courts Martial of 1792, an edited transcription of the Admiralty’s minutes held (rather precariously) at Kew.

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