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Welcome from the editor

Welcome to this issue of Dockyards and on behalf of everyone on the committee, we sincerely hope that you are managing in the current difficult pandemic crisis. The crisis has sadly meant we have to postpone our visit to Sheerness. The Ray Riley conference has also suffered this fate.

We are still expecting that our interesting 2021 conferences will proceed, and our secretary Dr Paul Brown is still looking for speakers for the March 2021 event at Greenwich: see the call for papers on page 32.

The long-term conservation of dockyard buildings will depend to a large extent on their having a viable use. In this issue we report on the award-winning conversion of the British Building in Cospicua, Malta (page 15). I personally think this is excellent but readers may think otherwise, let me know! At Chatham, we report that CEO Bill Ferris has retired recently: his policy of ‘preservation through re-use’ has been very successful in finding an excellent future for his dockyard estate (page 5).

As we went to press, former submariner Ian Whitehouse was launching an appeal to raise £40,000 for a feasibility study into making nuclear submarine HMS Courageous the centre of a Cold War Maritime Heritage Museum either at the head of No. 1 Dock in Devonport or at Oceangate in Plymouth. Courageous has been open for booked tours since retirement from active service in 1993. Whitehouse points to nuclear submarines in France and the USA attracting more than 125,000 visitors annually. It would be excellent if Courageous could be preserved in a dockyard museum, as fellow Falkland veterans the carrier INS Virat (ex-HMS Hermes) went for scrap in September 2020 and in all probability HMS Bristol will follow shortly.

Some readers may have attended the NDS’s successful 2016 Woolwich walk. I visited the Arsenal site on 18 September (see pictures below) and was a little dismayed to find the historic buildings increasingly dwarfed by modern tower blocks, as we fear will soon occur at neighbouring Deptford as discussed elsewhere in this newsletter (page 4). We entered Building 10 (Royal Carriage Factory) on our walk but sadly at least 20 per cent of the crane run will not be retained in the redevelopment. Thankfully the Officers’ Quarters of 1740 in Major Draper Street have been restored, although the developer wanted to demolish them to create space for a cab rank!

As we were going to press, in a similar vein to Woolwich, reports from Gibraltar suggest a big new development is dwarfing the elegant twentieth-century British Forces HQ building.

I’ve been fortunate recently to become a trustee of two UK charities with Falkland maritime links. The Friends of The Falkland Islands Museum is one – www.fimafriends.co.uk. The Museum is located in the historic dockyard area and is looking to raise over £2m for a new lookout gallery and exhibition hall. Good news recently is a loan from the Falkland government of £500,000. It is fifty years since the SS Great Britain was brought back from the Falklands to Bristol, where she is still open of course as a museum – www.ssgreatbritain.org. A really good short video shows the story of her return to the UK – https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pgt8Oyz6Zi0&feature=youtube and the Falkland Museum has an exhibition featuring inter alia furniture stripped from the ship by locals while she was a hulk there.

The other charity, Falkland Maritime Heritage Trust, recently found the wreck of the German cruiser Scharnhorst sunk at the Battle of the Falkland Islands in 1914 and has further interesting
plans to locate wrecks in the South Atlantic. Let me know if you would like more information about these.

Many thanks to Nicholas Blake and Rachel Smyth for their expert help in producing this newsletter. All pictures are by the authors of the articles unless otherwise stated.

Richard Holme, editor

Dockyards reopen!

The closure in March 2020 of Portsmouth Historic Dockyard and all its attractions including the National Museum of the Royal Navy (NMRN) in line with government advice on the COVID-19 epidemic was unprecedented – and the effect on the NMRN, and on the historic ships and boats, was incalculable as the museum faced its deepest financial crisis in a generation. All but three of the Historic Dockyard staff were furloughed as were those of the museum, except for those performing essential tasks such as security checks and those working from home. Those still on site continued to maintain the museum’s buildings, ships and collections and the museum’s digital channels were refreshed. The director general said that the challenge of making up the shortfall in admissions income had to be faced, while doing the right thing for staff, for the collection and for the museum as a whole. On 23 July he announced that the closure had crippled the NMRN’s revenue, effectively wiping out the entire summer season when most of its yearly income is generated. The museum was days away from declaring itself insolvent after losing £6.35m – when the Treasury approved an emergency rescue fund of £5.3m to save it from bankruptcy. It will no doubt take the Portsmouth Dockyard Property Trust a long time to recover from the loss of income over a prolonged period, but by prudent planning they were better placed than many to weather the storm.

Once funding and distancing decisions were taken, the Heritage Area reopened with online booking only, on 24 August. Billboard adverts said, ‘We’ve swabbed the decks!’ and the website invited us to ‘Jump on board and explore our ships, museums and attractions with all the family – whilst knowing that as a charity your admission income helps us survive and protect our future.’ A £23 ticket for pensioners to visit the Submarine Museum might be too much for many. Free entry to Boathouse 4 was not immediately available but was likely to be reintroduced towards the end of October. Volunteers at the Portsmouth Royal Dockyard Historical Trust began to get back to their normal routine, but although they were classed as a ‘workspace’ they had to operate on a reduced numbers basis. With constant shifting of the guidance goalposts they had to cancel their 2020 AGM.

Richard Holdsworth, Director of Heritage, Public Engagement and Learning at Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust, reported that ‘In one sense we never closed as we had to remain open for residents and tenants. We restarted our on-site visitor operation on 24 July and so far, all is good. Consistently good reviews on Trip Advisor and social media despite Ocelot and below-decks Cavalier remaining closed, and are concentrating on delivering core dockyard related product. We have capped visitor numbers at Covid-safe levels, established one-way systems as well as getting on for 80 hand sanitiser stations across the site!’

Dr Celia Clark
Deptford Dockyard has a sympathetic advocate in Voice4Deptford

Convoy's Wharf has been the site name for London Borough of Lewisham (LBL) planning applications for the 40-acre site comprising Deptford Royal Dockyard, Sayes Court (John Evelyn's seventeenth-century manor house and garden), and part of Royal Victoria Victualling Yard. In discussions with Voice4Deptford (V4D), it was agreed that continued use of this name, which imported paper products for News International until 1999, diminishes public recognition of Deptford Royal Dockyard.

The NDS has responded to regeneration designs for Deptford Royal Dockyard since 2004.* Since the first Richard Rogers Partnership design, we have criticized all the planning applications for failing to reflect Deptford's maritime location and underground archaeology, merely providing a generic high-rise development, with no specific connection to this site. They all needed a richer conceptual vision to add authentic heritage, environmental and social value to the site.

Voice4Deptford (V4D) is a broad-based community organisation and project of Pepys Community Forum (http://www.pepys.community/), including established Deptford campaigners. It is pursuing a Judicial Review against Lewisham Borough Council for passing three applications for approval of reserved matters for Plots 8, 15 and 22 on 9 and 22 June 2020, when technically the outline planning permission had timed out for the whole site. These three plots comprise a fraction of 'Convoy's Wharf', for which Hutchison Whampoa were granted outline planning permission on 10 March 2015. Although Hutchison claimed in 2014 to be anxious to progress their plans, they submitted no reserved matters applications until these three in 2018. Condition 1 of the outline planning agreement allowed thirteen years for all the reserved matters to be agreed (rather than the normal three years) and two years to complete the development, that is, fifteen years in total. That is the underlying procedure that V4D is contesting by challenging the three decisions.

The overall scheme, described in Hutchison's latest planning application DC/13/83358, demonstrates almost no appreciation for the history of Deptford Royal Dockyard. It will provide a mixed-use development of up to 419,100m² comprising up to 3,500 residential units, including three tall buildings of twenty-six, thirty-two and forty storeys, and offices, restaurant/cafe/bar and hotel space. It will retain and refurbish the listed Olympia Building and demolish all the remaining non-listed structures. Only 15 per cent of the homes will be 'affordable': 5 per cent at London Affordable Rent (60 per cent of market rent) and 10 per cent shared ownership. LBL's target for this is 50 per cent. This characterizes the development as high-cost, offering little relief to LBL's housing shortage.

V4D is awaiting the first judge's decision, which was due at the end of August 2020, about whether their case can go for full judicial review. V4D needs £20,000 to take the case through the full judicial review, to pay their barristers and court fees and the defendant's costs if they lose. They have raised £14,000 and need around a further £6,000 at this stage. If they win, LBL will pay their costs.

The ultimate aim of V4D is a new masterplan for Deptford Royal Dockyard which is more historically relevant and environmentally sound with a human design that meets present housing needs. A ruling by the judge that the outline consent has timed out will allow them to do that.

V4D also believes that Covid-19 will reduce future demand for cramped high-rise flats and commuting. More people will be working from home and want more mixed and greener environments. Apparently, there is currently 120 per cent overproduction of high-rise apartments in London. So, there will be less demand for such a design.

What the NDS and V4D would like to see is a new masterplan which explicitly references the local, national and international significance of Deptford Royal Dockyard. Celebrating the Tudor and early Georgian storehouses and linking the Grade II listed 1846 Olympia shipbuilding shed visibly to...

* NDS website campaign https://navaldockyards.org/deptford/; Ann Coats, ‘Five Hundred Years of Deptford and Woolwich Royal Dockyards and counting . . .’, Philip MacDougall, ed., Transactions of the Naval Dockyards Society, Vol. 11, Five Hundred Years of Deptford and Woolwich (Naval Dockyards Society, 2019), ISBN 978-0-9929292-8-2, £15.00 plus P&P from avcoatsndschair@gmail.com, or Kindle edition https://www.amazon.co.uk/Hundred-Years-Deptford-Woolwich-Dockyards-ebook/dp/B084H15ZDN.
the footprint of the basin, docks and slipways will signify the continuity of shipbuilding at Deptford. Vistas through the yard towards the river, and particularly from Olympia and the basin to the river should be key features of any design.

Interpretation through the Sayes Court and Build the Lenox (www.buildthelenox.org) projects will bring activity and community engagement. Embedding Deptford’s tangible and intangible heritage would give this project a unique character, inform the design and proclaim its ‘brand’.

We send V4D good wishes in their aims.

Dr Ann Coats

V4D Planning Group update, 2 October 2020

Our claim for Judicial Review has not been successful and at this point our pursuit of a legal remedy to the proposed development at Convoy’s Wharf, Royal Dockyards site via this route has now come to an end.

The campaign, however, is far from over, and the Planning Group is now re-grouping to plan the next stage of the campaign strategy. NDS are a very important ally in the campaign and we value your support enormously. We hope you will stay with us as the next stage develops and we will keep you up to date with developments as the next steps become clear.


We very much hope to hold further discussions with you on how we can work together to achieve a fair result for the Deptford site and its community.

All change at Chatham

Bill Ferris OBE DL retired on 31 August 2020 after nineteen successful years as Chief Executive of the Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust. The dockyard is now a successful tourist attraction with 190,000 visitors each year. The Trust also has a thriving property portfolio with 115 houses as well as commercial buildings, accommodating over 110 businesses and organizations, including the University of Kent and 800 of its students.

When appointed in December 2000, the dockyard faced challenges but Bill adopted a policy of ‘preservation through re-use’ for the many historic buildings. The Trust’s website refers to him being appointed in 2000 due to his experience of maximising commercial return while delivering high operational standards from educational and landmark projects, especially those located in historic buildings . . . a particular strength . . . When Bill arrived, the Trust was facing significant financial challenges and its reputation was at an all time low. He replaced the original ‘living museum’ concept of the Dockyard with a more ‘serious’ museum/heritage approach and spearheaded the ‘preservation through re-use’ strategy – a strategy that would ultimately lead to the long-term financial sustainability of the Trust on a revenue basis.
In his time £47m was spent on various projects, of which over £40m came from external sources. Bill leaves the dockyard in a very good state, having stayed on a bit longer than anticipated due to the Covid crisis.

Our Chair Dr Ann Coats comments:

Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust has certainly achieved great successes under Bill Ferris’s leadership, in creative interpretation, sound estate management and financial oversight: All the listed buildings now have a sustainable re-use and CHD is revenue self-sufficient.

Bill is succeeded by Richard Morsley, who has been acting as Assistant Chief Executive. Bill was previously director at Betteshanger Parks and prior to that deputy director at the Turner Contemporary gallery at Margate. We wish Richard well, particularly in seeing the dockyard out of the Covid crisis.

Richard Holme

Sheerness Dockyard Preservation Trust AGM September 2020

Attending this event online, I was pleased to hear Chair Will Palin report that the construction stage of refurbishing St Paul’s Dockyard Church would begin on 2 November 2020, delayed understandably for five months by Covid-19. Will thanked all the funders (notably the National Heritage Lottery Fund: £4.25m, plus a total of £500k since the start of the project from Historic England) and especially Lottery ticket purchasers, who had made this project possible. The Trust had also raised £3.9m in match funding for the Lottery grant from other sponsors, including £1,000 awarded through the NDS’s competitive funding scheme to assist in the transport, conservation and display of the Sheerness Dockyard model, key to interpreting the church within the larger dockyard context.

This model, made c.1825, encompasses approximately ‘1,600sq ft, making it probably the largest architectural model ever constructed in Britain.’ It was constructed to a much larger scale (1 inch to 5 feet) than the six 1774 royal dockyard models made for George III, but fulfilled the same function: to aid the Navy Board’s recording and comprehension of the site. Following Sheerness Dockyard’s closure in 1960, it lay neglected in Medway Port Authority’s offices, but was ‘rescued from imminent destruction in 1972 by the Department of the Environment’s Ancient Monuments Branch, now English Heritage.’ It has been stored subsequently at Fort Brockhurst in Gosport.

Although rescued, its less than ideal environmental conditions will soon be improved. Will Palin reported that three partners have enabled the model to be refurbished: English Heritage, who are gifting it, engineer Alan Baxter, who will provide secure archival storage, and specialist model conservators Atom Ltd., who are currently constructing packing cases to transport the model. English Heritage are hoping to re-open their store in November 2020 and the model will then be stored in Lincolnshire, surveyed and conserved until the church is ready to display it.

Dr Ann Coats

Portsmouth Round-up: Buildings at Risk Update

Refurbishment of No. 14 Dock at Portsmouth: part one

The last newsletter highlighted that ‘significant maintenance work’ had been done on the buildings in the dockyard, particularly Long Row on The Parade.

A letter was written to Navy Command in April 2020, appreciating the Navy’s challenge in balancing funds between operational infrastructure, ships, personnel and preservation of heritage. It

recognized that a significant improvement on the performance of the previous ten years had been achieved during 2019/20, particularly the remarkable change to the external appearance of The Parade/Long Row and reuse of Rodney Block and historic buildings on Watering Island. We asked if there were any plans to re-occupy Long Row.

A reply was received dated 30 July 2020.

Over the past 12 months substantial external works to The Parade/Long Row have progressed alongside critical works to the Old Naval Academy, 25 Store, Block Mills and Admiralty House. Progress on the design work for a cofferdam to protect No. 6 Dock also continues. On Watering Island, work is well advanced in modernising the second and third floors of Semaphore Tower and bringing Buildings 1/046 and 1/049 into full time use, together it will become the new regional headquarters of RN and RM Reserves, HMS KING ALFRED.

Further works stabilising The Parade’s rear elevation and refurbishing No.1 for use as a residence have commenced and is due for completion this year. The Naval Base will also be looking into procuring a replacement for the caisson entrance for No.1 Basin, which is the first critical step in providing the ability to control water levels in the basin. Which in turn is the first vital enabler to restoring the gates at No. 4 and 5 Docks in the future so that they can be drained and repaired.

This is a very encouraging commitment to ongoing maintenance, which the NDS is pleased to commend. From other sources, it seems that Long Row's Heritage at Risk’s current ‘A’ designation, ‘Immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of fabric; no solution agreed’, is likely to be revised in the not too distant future.

We also asked about plans for targeted disposals and the response was: ‘we remain committed to optimising the Royal Navy’s use of the Portsmouth Naval Base site, and where it is feasible to do so, to repurpose our historic estate in order the reduce future liabilities and more importantly, to release such buildings for more effective use.’

We did ask for photographs of the Long Row refurbishment that we could publish. The letter ended by undertaking to share articles with NDS about the improvements which we can share with members.

Dr Ann Coats

Refurbishment of No. 14 Dock at Portsmouth: part two

HMS Daring is pictured in June 2020 in No. 14 Dock after it had been refurbished at a cost of £13m. A new gantry crane reaching 68 metres above the dock can also service the adjacent No. 15 Dock. A new caisson has been fitted and a sonar pit installed to accommodate vessels with hull-mounted domes. No. 14 Dock was emptied for the first time in fifteen years and most of its surface was cleaned. The last ship to undertake deep maintenance in the dock had been HMS Enterprise in 2003. The refurbished dock will principally service destroyers and frigates.

No. 14 Dock was completed originally in 1896. 563 feet long and 82 feet wide, No 14 and 15 docks could accommodate the latest Victorian battleships, the Formidable and Duncan classes. High priority was given to their completion.
Nearly 800 men were employed excavating the docks by both day and night, using Lucal lamps (which burned paraffin and petrol) for illumination at night. The bottom of the dock was made up of 3ft of concrete, 7ft of brickwork and 4ft 6in of granite blocks, giving a total thickness of 14ft 6in. The sides of the dock varied from 5–10ft thick.*

The evocative 1914 image shows No. 14 Dock with the 1912 250 ton crane to the rear (an elder sister to the Singapore crane covered elsewhere in this issue) and a 100-ton steam sheerlegs built in 1900 and obsolete just ten years later. Also, the dreadnought HMS Queen Elizabeth.

Richard Holme (with acknowledgements to Tom Cotterill of the News)

**Accommodating the carriers**

Heavy expenditure has been incurred mainly at Portsmouth to accommodate the two new carriers. A jetty to accommodate Queen Elizabeth was commissioned in August 2017 at a cost of £60.4m with associated dredging costing £49m, higher than the budgeted £30m, due to the quantum of unexploded ordnance from the 1939–45 War. A second jetty, for Prince of Wales, was completed in September 2019 at a cost of £46m. A logistics centre at Portsmouth for the carriers will cost £9m and be complete in 2022. Meanwhile up in Scotland, at Glen Mallan, the ammunition jetty is being replaced at a cost of £90m to accommodate the two huge ships. A total cost therefore of around £250m associated with the carriers.†

**Will we lose Queen Victoria’s railway station?**

One area, the south-east part of Royal Clarence Yard, which has the navy’s oil fuel jetty linked to the storage depot west of the Gosport lines and St. George Barracks as its northern boundary, remained unrestored in 2020. It was ‘the last piece of the jigsaw’ of MOD disposals on the Gosport shore according to the leader of Gosport Borough Council; the Ministry of Defence announced its intention to dispose of it in 2014 but this did not happen immediately. In June 2017 Gosport Borough Council included Royal Clarence Yard as a ‘Character Area’ and proposals for its eventual development in a draft ‘Waterfront and Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document’. In November 2018 the MoD put the 5.2 acre (2.1 ha) site up for sale, emphasizing its ‘full deep-water access to Portsmouth Harbour, making it ideally suitable for commercial marine activity’.‡

Historic buildings there include the former South Stores of which the single-storey west range was built by Samuel Wyatt in 1758 for the storage of rum. Extended to three storeys in the nineteenth century, it was reduced to two storeys by bombing. Parallel with this is the former Tank Store converted from the boom defence depot of 1832 for the storage of water for ships, fed by a heavily buttressed reservoir. Of cast-iron construction with gantries it has a brick and timber-clad exterior and a double-pitch roof.

East of this is ‘the heavily truncated remains of the Royal Station, terminus of the special branch line from Gosport Station used by Queen Victoria from 1845’ to embark on the Royal Yacht to sail to and from Osborne House on the Isle of Wight. The tank store was expanded to include ‘Her Majesty's Landing Furniture Store’, where the red carpet was stored. It was originally 520 feet (158m) long, with the canopy over the track supported on cast-iron columns.

Gosport Borough Council was offered the site for £1 but rejected it because of the necessarily extensive building repairs that would be required. When it was put up for sale in 2019 the Naval Base Property Trust expressed interest in buying it for £1 plus 50% of development value after deduction of all costs associated with the development.§ They proposed that the former cooperage might well be used for the purpose for which it was originally built, given the increased demand from the craft spirit industry for English oak barrels which were unavailable; the only operational UK cooperage was in Scotland. They proposed to demolish the remains of Queen Victoria’s Railway

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§ PNBPT RCY offer and supporting documents 03 04 19.
Station and relocate it. There was a precedent for this when her Railway Shelter in the dockyard was shifted on rollers to a new position on South Railway Jetty. There were ownership matters to be resolved between the MOD and the Crown Estate connected with the jetty and slipway and contamination from a previous fuel pipe. They intended to work in partnership with Elite Homes with whom they were already working at Priddy’s.

Instead, the MoD sold the site to UK Docks based in Tyneside in September 2019, which planned to expand its maritime servicing and repair business there. The selling agent acting on behalf of the MoD said the five and a half acre site was one of the largest sold in the last decade. UK Docks applied for planning permission to pull down five buildings including the railway station. The heritage statement they commissioned from Giles Pritchard suggested that the station be fully recorded by a conservation architect and preparation of a method statement for its careful dismantling, storage on pallets and reassembly once proposed uses are found for the remaining heritage. The NDS and Hampshire Buildings Preservation Trust were asked to consider whether to object to the loss of the railway station, which also aroused local opposition. However, Giles Pritchard submitted a revised site plan on 18 September 2020 which removed the demolition of Building 49 (Railway Station) from the application.

Dr Celia Clark

A new attraction – LCT 7074 reborn . . .

Now outside the D-Day Museum, LCT 7074 is the last surviving tank landing craft: it delivered troops to Gold Beach, Normandy at about midnight on D-Day. Jim Jarman’s book *Those Wallowing Beauties The Story of Landing Barges in World War II* has eyewitness accounts of the severe difficulties of operating landing craft in the storms of 17–18 June 1944 on Gold Beach. LCT 7074 was used to remove vehicles damaged or swamped in the surf blocking access to the beaches and to refloat other landing craft. After the war it was used as the floating headquarters of the Master Mariners Club. It subsequently became a nightclub (‘Clubship Landfall’) owned by George ‘Jud’ Evans. From the late 1960s to early 1970s it was moored in Canning Dock, next to the (then unrestored) Albert Dock in Liverpool. In 1972 it moved to Collingwood Dock and then to Birkenhead Docks, where it later sank. In 2017 the Heritage Lottery Fund awarded the National Museum of the Royal Navy, which now

Above: Sunk at Birkenhead 2010. (I. Buxton)

Left: Awaiting restoration at Portsmouth.
owns it, a £4.7m grant to raise and to restore it in the naval base\(^18\) and then to put it on display in front of the D-Day museum transit shed. The plan was to install it with the Sherman and Churchill tanks on board to coincide with VE-Day in May 2020, but Covid-19, the need for further fundraising and storms delayed its move from the dockyard.

On 24 August 2020 it was finally transferred on heavy rotating wheels from a pontoon moored parallel to Southsea beach to trundle slowly along the seafront road, watched by a large crowd of interested onlookers: a surreal sight! It took a further week to lift the two tanks inside it and to slide it sideways to rest under its heavy wavy steel structure designed by architect Giles Pritchard. As it’s in the public area outside the museum entry is free via its ramp which is raised each morning and closed at night. Nearby are an anti-aircraft gun and the statues of General Montgomery and an exhausted soldier.

Dr Celia Clark

**NDS objects to Bermuda’s notice to delist unique Albert Row**

On 24 August 2020 the NDS wrote to the Hon. Walter Roban, Minister of Home Affairs responsible for Planning, and Larry Williams, Assistant Director of Planning, to present its case for conserving the four rows of workers’ houses dating from the 1840s.

The last surviving workers’ houses at Bermuda Dockyard: Albert Row, 6–14 Malabar Road Sandys, were Grade II listed by the Bermuda government in 2000 because of their special interest and architectural and historical value.

However, the Hon. Walter H. Roban, JP, MP, Minister of Home Affairs, Minister responsible for Planning, accepted West End Development Corporation (Wedco)’s request to delist Albert Row, 6–12 Malabar Road, Sandys (Grade 2) and subsequently demolish.*

The NDS objected to their demolition for four reasons.

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* 28 July 2020, ID GN0663/2020. identifies them as 6–12 Malabar Road whereas the Government of Bermuda Ministry of Environment, Planning and Infrastructure Strategy: Buildings of special architectural or historic interest, Development and Planning Act 1974, Part V, Section 30, described them as 6–14 Malabar Road.
1. The historical rarity value of Albert Row as buildings

As the *Royal Gazette* stated in 2015, when Victoria Row was threatened with demolition, ‘Victoria and Albert Rows are the last remaining examples of the housing built for Dockyard tradesmen or artisans and their families.’ Similar housing in ‘Portland Place, Princess Louise Terrace, Clarence Terrace, and Marine Terrace at Lodge Point — have all been demolished.’ It emphasized:

Victoria Row is part of the old Dockyard ‘town’ that included schools, a hospital, theatre, stores and a post office and supplied the technical expertise and labour to run the giant industrial complex. Today, only a few buildings survive in usable condition to represent that thriving community. *(Royal Gazette, ‘Trust regrets end of Victoria Row’, Oct 10, 2015, [http://www.royalgazette.com/article/20151010/NEWS/151019988](http://www.royalgazette.com/article/20151010/NEWS/151019988)*

Both rows are shown as ‘Dwelling Houses’ and ‘Workmens Cottages’ and named in the 1909 map (Fig. 2). Victoria Row comprised three rows of eight houses. As Jonathan Coad wrote in a NDS article in December 2016:

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. They are almost the last survivors of very limited examples of housing built for dockyard workers – skilled tradespeople and others – as distinct from housing for dockyard officers. The 1909 TNA plan of the dockyard (Fig. 3 [here Fig. 2]) shows a quite extraordinary amount of housing outside the yard for the workforce. It would be interesting to know exactly who was living in these terraces. It would seem that workers’ housing was provided only in very limited circumstances and only survives today at Haulbowline and at Bermuda. In short, Albert Row has considerable rarity value. *(‘Final act in the tragedy of*

The unlisted Victoria Row was demolished in May 2016 at a cost of $331,400. For supposedly derelict buildings, this took several weeks — the houses must have been more robust than described. Their demise has been noticed on social media: ‘Look around you, and tell me how many buildings still survive from the ole Dockyard? The first round of houses are gone’. [Victoria Row in 2016] (Facebook: Old Bermuda: Our Island, Our History, Aug. 2020)

2. Wedco has financially and professionally failed to maintain its estate; establishing instead a programme of managed decay for Victoria and Albert Rows

Wedco (West End Development Corporation, set up in 1974 as a quasi-autonomous agency accountable to the Ministry of Public Works to manage the dockyard) has a financial and professional duty of care for the dockyard estate, but has neglected to reinvest revenue to maintain workers’ housing. Built of hard limestone and Bermuda cedar, the buildings only require lime-washing every two years to keep them weathertight. Wedco has instead performed a published policy of managed decay for Victoria and Albert Rows since 2009. (Royal Gazette, ‘Govt rejected Habitat for Humanity proposal for Victoria and Albert Row’, 8 June 2012)

These almost globally rare buildings (the only comparable surviving example is in Haulbowline, Cork), have not been accorded an appropriate level of conservation management. Albert Row dwellings are the latest among around fifty buildings in the dockyard to have been demolished since WW2.

Albert Row was vacated in 2014, allowing these 1,200 square feet dwellings to be ‘condemned’, whereas equal-sized properties in Prince Alfred Terrace, former officers’ houses, were renovated to create twelve three-bedroom units with one bathroom and one two-bedroom unit.*

Although Victoria and Albert Rows have international heritage property significance, no objective condition survey or valuation of them has ever been presented by Wedco, despite many representations by the NDS since 2012 that ‘Sustainable renovation of Albert and Victoria Rows would create tradesmen’s jobs and train young people in essential crafts such as applying lime mortar, transferable elsewhere in Bermuda.’

A Victoria and Albert Rows Building Trust could apply for interest-free government loans to make renovations or restorations and let the dwellings once the economic market improves.

Such sustainable refurbishment would benefit from future rental/resale value and retain the embodied energy of these houses, built by manual labour from locally quarried limestone and local cedar.

Wedco found funds to restore HMS Malabar (Moresby House) and Prince Alfred Terrace (for holiday rentals), and re-roof and make further buildings watertight in the north yard of the Dockyard, but not the houses of workers who actually repaired the ships.

3. The social heritage value of Albert Row

Roger Bendall, who has set up the Facebook group ‘The Historic Royal Naval Dockyard Bermuda, personal and family stories’ (https://www.facebook.com/groups/408892213001927/), has many memories. His shipwright father Bill was transferred to Bermuda in 1936 to work on the Floating Dock. At the outbreak of war, he was ordered to stay in Bermuda. The family lived in Albert Row from about 1939 to 1950, Roger and his brother born during the Second World War. Memories of his childhood are mostly social:

Birthday parties, friends and neighbours, catching fish, the stairs my father built down to the beach. My father was a carpenter as well as shipwright and using Bermuda cedar wood he made many household furnishings, lamps, trays, boxes for the family and for the neighbours. This was a

community of people who from 1939 through to 1950 lived the Second World War, never knowing if or when they would be attacked and missing their families at home as they listened to the stories of the Blitz on the radio. I remember the tears my father shed as he listened to an American news-

man describing the battle of the River Plate as he realised that two of his brothers had been killed on the Ajax.

And the hurricanes. Albert Row was wide open to the west and we were drilled to shutter the sea-facing side of the house and open the back doors to maintain internal air pressure.

Albert Row has been continuously occupied from the 1840s until 2014. In 1953 the Admiralty let the houses, comprising three or four bedrooms, a wide hall, two living rooms, kitchen, bath-

room, verandah and small back garden. Commanding ‘a fine view to the northwest’, they were let unfurnished on a year’s lease at £10 a month, the Admiralty undertaking to ensure that they were ‘wind and weather tight’, in other words, limewashing and repairing hurricane damage. Many of the tenants were ‘people who have in one way or another been connected with the former Dockyard.’ (Bermuda newspaper cutting, 1953, pp. 1, 11).

4. The international heritage and tourism value of Albert Row


The Government has made it a priority to conserve and promote the historic fortifications within the World Heritage property. The property has a Management Plan, which provides the framework for managing change in a way that preserves and enhances the integrity of the World Heritage property.

To this end, ‘the Bermuda Government has appointed a Heritage Officer since 2005 to provide the necessary coordination. Further, this officer is mandated to ensure that the Management Plan is implemented and specific projects are on track.’

However, the dockyard is not included in the Bermuda government’s listing. In October 2017 Bermuda Real reported: ‘Works Minister Colonel David Burch will bring forward a Motion to include all of Bermuda’s historic “fortifications from Hamilton Parish to Sandys Parish by way of a Supplemental Application to UNESCO”.’

While noting that the proposed additions fall within the terms of the original designation for the Old Town of St George’s only, he said: “All such fortifications, especially the largest at the old Royal Naval Dockyard, are related to St Georges and thus, within the terms of the original designation of our World Heritage Site.” (Bermuda Real https://www.bermudareal.com/motion-to-add-all-historic-fortifications-to-st-georges-on-world-heritage-site-list/)

This enhanced protection would increase international awareness of Bermuda and the dockyard, inevitably increasing international heritage tourism. Visitors would expect a complete social interpre-
tation of the dockyard: not just the Commissioner’s House and officers’ houses, but worker’s houses too. The plight of Albert Row was given prominence recently in the Commonwealth Heritage Forum newsletter (http://commonwealthheritage.org/article_dockyard_ann_coats.html).

Tourism would benefit; ‘castles built in 1300 in UK that are in worst shape can be saved and have television shows made around them – but you need a vision and passion’. (Facebook: Old Bermuda: Our Island, Our History, Aug. 2020)

The NDS urged Mr Roban to devote vision and passion to Albert Row to conserve these dwellings for the enjoyment of future Bermudans and visitors and provide an economic benefit for Bermuda. Although showing evidence of lack of maintenance, all four blocks endure in their entirety. We hope that the recent hurricanes Paulette and Teddy (13–15 and 21 September 2020) have not caused them further damage.

See also our Bermuda campaigns webpage at https://navaldockyards.org/bermuda-2/

Note: as we went to press, the NDS were informed (on 2 October 2020) by Bermuda’s Royal Gazette that ‘according to a Government notice, Albert Row has now been delisted.’

I responded with a statement: ‘As Chair of the Naval Dockyards Society, which has campaigned nationally and internationally since 2012 to conserve Albert Row, I am deeply disturbed that the
Minister of Home Affairs responsible for Planning has ignored advice from Bermuda professionals and public organisations to conserve these unique workers’ houses as economically viable residential heritage assets. The Bermuda government has thus endorsed Wedco’s continuing record of discriminatory managed decay for dockyard workers’ houses, compared with officers’ houses and larger commercially profitable properties.’

Dr Ann Coats

Small craft seventy-five years after 1945

After hostilities ceased in 1945, the Royal Navy had thousands of surplus ships and boats that were no longer needed, often worn out from valiant war service. Many were scrapped but equally many were resold for further service. A small minority of these survive to this day, often as houseboats now due to their age; a cluster of these exist at Shoreham-by-Sea for example.

At West Mersea, Essex lie the remains of High Speed Launch 145 (HSL 145). Beached close to shore, she fills with water on each high tide. In wartime she rescued 486 airmen who had downed in the sea. She served in the English Channel, at posts such as Calshot and Newhaven, and further afield at Felixstowe and Gibraltar. Ironic that she should end her days by a lifeboat station. In 1946, stripped of her armament and engines, she was sold at Birdham by the Small Craft Disposal Board’s Depot to the Zierold family, who renamed her Nanaloa and used her as a pleasure craft until they sold her in 1993. Since then despite best intentions from owners, she has deteriorated to her present condition.

Richard Holme (with thanks to Phil Simons)
Continuing progress at Isla del Rey Minorca

A report of progress on the ongoing restoration of the naval hospital off Mahon covered in previous issues, including a link to a superb video.

We've had very few British visitors this year so the English guides have been a bit bored. Fortunately, most of us are multi-use and can turn our hand to the other hundred and one jobs to be done on the island. However, it’s not all bad news as the Spanish and French visitors have been turning up in good numbers. From the beginning of July until the end of September we’ve had the catamarans bringing people over every day and that has gone well.

The Hauser & Wirth building will be finished at the end of this year and the gallery will be open by the beginning of summer so that will make a big change. There will be regular boats during the day coming and going according to the demand and a canteen open for refreshments as well as the Interpretation Centre for the history of the port open to the public in the old hospital. The ground-floor rooms will be better understood with a guide as there are many interesting items of medical equipment, pharmacy, a new room for ophthalmology and a new laboratory which copies a laboratory of a hundred years ago. To summarize, we’re building up to a busy year in 2021 and hoping that the dreaded Covid doesn’t spoil all our plans.

Despite all the obstacles, we’ve managed to get more funding from private individuals. The latest has been the American room sponsored by an American volunteer and the Paleochristian room sponsored by a Spanish gentleman with a holiday home here, we now have a book on the island printed in French thanks to a French gentleman’s donation, a Canadian living in London has given us the funds for the disabled toilets and a Frenchman living locally has given us a generous donation for whatever we need (the best type of donation!). How international can you get?

There are still lots of activities planned, the German consul is visiting as I write today to look into the history of the Hanoverian troops here, next Sunday we have a local government group visiting of a hundred people to especially see the Paleochristian basilica. It’s a busy and challenging time but with very positive results.

Obviously, we’re having to respect coronavirus limitations, the volunteers and visitors have refreshments separately and only ten people per group of visitors or volunteers together. Masks are worn at all times unless eating or drinking. The local government rules change often depending on the number of cases and circumstances, but we can adapt and so far, it has been safe.

Here is the link for the YouTube video in English which you may find interesting to see, it’s just five minutes but with some lovely images of the island: https://youtu.be/W_8QDFu1nO

As you can see from this video, a huge amount has been achieved but we still have a long way to go. One day we’ll be able to hand it over to our grandchildren, but for the meantime, plenty of work and more funding always needed.

Beverley Ward

No. 1 Dock, Cospicua, Malta – award-winning architecture

Introduction

The use to which historic dockyard buildings are put is often fundamental to their survival. In Malta, the buildings around No. 1 Dock in Dockyard Creek fell into decay late in the last century with doubts perhaps about their continued existence. The British building on the west side of the dock, originally designed by William Scamp, has recently been revitalised with award-winning work by leading Maltese architects EM Architects and is now occupied by the American University of Malta (AUM). The British building has been conserved, but also extended and modernised. Two articles below review this historic complex and its locality, history, design and recent transformation. The
first is by two dockyard historians, Dr Paul Brown and Professor John Tunbridge, and covers the historic complex in the area while the other, by Dr Edwin Mintoff of EM Architects, focuses on their award-winning British building.

For consistency the articles refer to No. 1 Dock; it is also known as Dock 1.

Richard Holme – editor

History and development

Although the excavation of a dry dock at Malta was first proposed in 1806 and authorised in 1811, its construction was abandoned in 1816, after a lot of work had been done, because of water seepage through fissures in the sandstone bedrock, and the wars with the French having ended. It was to be nearly another thirty years before another attempt was made, in 1844, at the head of Dockyard Creek, resulting in No. 1 Dock, which was intended to cater for the new steam vessels entering service in the Royal Navy. Designed by William Scamp, it was the first dry dock to be built at an overseas yard, and together with Scamp’s new bakery it made Malta the navy’s main Mediterranean base. The dock was inaugurated on 9 September 1848, with the entry of HMS Antelope for refitting, and was enlarged between 1855 and 1862.

On the east side of the dock the workshops were built including a central block which was a boiler platers’ shop. Smitheries, one used by the Department of Shipwrights and the other by the Department of Engineers, and a foundry were constructed on each side of the central block. These buildings were demolished between 1972 and 1974. The design of this range was mirrored by Scamp in the facade of his building on the opposite side of the dock, still extant today as the ‘British Building’. This housed a sawmill, the coppersmiths’ and other workshops, stores and the dock pump.

To the north of this latter building was a long, narrow stone-built block appropriated from the Knights of St John, now commonly known as the ‘Knights’ Building’. The buildings which line the Porto delle Galere, as it was known by the Order, initially consisted of historic stores or magazzini, construction of which had begun in 1776. They were known as the corps de magazines, built by the Knights as an arsenal where the galleys would winter in the shelter of the vaulted spaces. The vaults were magnificent spaces with the names of the ships harbouring within engraved above each entrance. After the British took Malta in 1800 the buildings were altered to accommodate more workshops, store rooms and a ropery. The range consisted of a series of ribbed barrel-vaulted chambers running back at rightangles from the dockside. Originally some had completely open fronts for use as boat stores, but later alterations obscured these. In many cases vaults were removed and replaced by cast-iron columns to carry another floor above. On this upper floor an 800ft-long ropery was erected in 1807–08 using mainly wood and canvas within stone pillars, but this was destroyed by fire in July 1809. A new flat-roofed ropery was quickly constructed of stone in its place, re-opening in January 1810. The side of the building facing the dock was arcaded, the twenty southern bays of which have survived. The ropery workforce consisted of six British ropemakers, sixteen hemp
breakers, sixteen hemp dressers, twenty-four spinners and twelve boys engaged in wheel turning, unloading and spinning thread, but rope production stopped in 1815 following the end of hostilities with the French. The space was subsequently used as a sail loft. This atmospheric building is now central, with the British Building which directly faces No. 1 Dock, to the redevelopment for the AUM.

Although the dock continued to be used until the 1980s, by the end of that century the buildings were derelict and the dock disused. A first visit in 2003 left the impression of a sad refuge for stray animals. However, in 2015 the buildings were offered to the AUM. Parts of the British Building were rebuilt and the facade was restored, within which the existing dock’s pump-room mechanism was integrated, while an intermediate level and a new upper floor with a modern glass-and-steel design were constructed. The Knights’ Building was actively undergoing revitalisation in 2020. The elegant stairway between the two buildings had been renovated, using EU funding, before their restoration began; however, it may be compromised by the planned new development noted below.

The redevelopment of the site may complement landscaping and other improvements to the dock area at Cospicua, turning a derelict area into an attractive waterfront, and potentially extending a landscaped walkway around the circumference of Dockyard Creek (of which No. 1 Dock constitutes the far extremity).

The AUM redevelopment should portend a new life for the Dock vicinity and a reconnection with the surrounding community, Cospicua. However, it has encountered considerable controversy on political, academic, planning and architectural grounds, and its ability to effect a sustained revitalisation of this far end of Dockyard Creek is not yet clear. One relevant factor will be the proposed intrusion of new buildings onto the site. Overall, the development will need to be compatible with the aspirations of the Three Cities which form the traditional dockyard community around the Creek, particularly with adjacent Cospicua. Space and access around the circumference of the Creek will matter directly to local inhabitants but also to the tourism growth that the area’s post-dockyard economy sorely needs. Design quality clearly matters as well, though it is – typically – a matter of contention: the now-complete British Building may merit praise for the features noted above, but has also attracted criticism from Din l-Art Helwa (National Trust) for height and material detriments to the historical identity, along with proposed new development intrusion, as into the stairway between the buildings. That would impede, at least, community access to the adjacent bridge across the dock.

Nevertheless, at the global scale design judgements may differ, and some may be sufficiently positive to offset some of the concerns for the project’s sustainability; notably, the contentious height and material of the British Building’s new top floor might be deemed an acceptable reuse compromise. We note that in May 2020 Maltese firm EM Architects won the Gold ‘A’ Design Award for their work on the building, in the 2019 Cultural Heritage and Culture Industry Design category, indicating it was within the top 3 per cent of entries. The competition aims to showcase the best designs in all creative disciplines and industries and is the world’s largest and most diverse design.
award. All entries are evaluated by an international jury, and each year more than two thousand designs are submitted from more than a hundred countries.

As a long overdue complement to earlier revitalisation and adaptive reuse elsewhere round the Creek shoreline, and as a potential boost to the local economy, the success of the project is greatly to be desired. Success must, however, incorporate positive engagement with the local community and the national interests of Malta. Initial comments from NGOs, in the public consultation regarding a university campus, had indicated a still continuing concern that the completed redevelopment would privilege questionable private profit over desirable public benefit, involving the loss of public space and historical views, if not (apparently) of access to the shoreline circuit.

The site is the strategic centrepiece of a series of cultural, urban space and design attractions around Dockyard Creek: notably Fort St Angelo; Scamp’s naval buildings now housing a casino, restaurants and the Maritime Museum; the Malta at War Museum in underground wartime shelters; the Macina and its recreated sheer legs; and the Senglea Point fort facing St Angelo across the Creek entrance. Further potential attractions include a British-era tunnel connecting the inner Creek to the Royal Navy’s later dockyard development (subsequently in commercial use) on French Creek, immediately to the south. Thus, a satisfactory revitalisation outcome of the No. 1 Dock precinct will be of disproportionate interest to the wider Three Cities locality, as well as to the NDS and to all who care for Malta.

**Dr Paul Brown and Prof. John Tunbridge**

**Sources:**
- Din l-Art Helwa, response to Planning Application PA/07496/16, Malta Planning Board, 2019.

**NB:** Dr John Ebejer (University of Malta) is warmly thanked for his illustrations, architectural insights and planning notes from supporting research and fieldwork in June 2020.

**The architect’s view**

The AUM project at No. 1 Dock in Cospicua (see the images on the following pages) represents the area returning to the character of the site before the British period. This return has not taken the character of a commercial and trade hub as it once was, but instead ushers in a new and vibrant use for a building which was once at the heart of British naval efforts in the Mediterranean. The AUM British Building is both a campus and masterplan for the area. However, before its current use as a university within a restored and rehabilitated building, the surrounding area was strikingly different. The changes which this area has gone through and its subsequent evolution are important in understanding its current architectural, cultural and historical timeline.

Prior to the construction of No. 1 Dock in the mid-nineteenth century, this part of Cospicua accommodated a thriving mercantile community. Malta’s strategic position within the Mediterranean (situatated right in the centre of the Med and acting as a stepping stone between North Africa and southern Italy) together with its deep natural harbours meant that the area was perfectly suited for maritime activity. Fishing and trade boomed, creating a strong and stable economy. This prosperity was reflected in the population growing from 1,200 inhabitants in 1565 to a peak of 12,148 individuals in 1901 (Serracino Inglott, 2015).

Architecture is intimately tied to life. As Winston Churchill famously pointed out: ‘we shape our buildings; thereafter they shape us’, meaning that architecture is a precursor and influential element which guides us. However, architecture is also a reflection of the times and a response to contemporary needs. Cospicua’s nature as a fertile trading hub gave birth to the construction of a local market there, which subsequently became the heart and soul of the community. In addition, it is understood that ‘elegant houses lined the waterfront, [as] a result of the wealth generated by sturdy commerce.’
This local character and identity was abruptly transformed when the British Admiralty in Malta was required to expand its naval activities, thus ensuring that Britannia would continue to dominate. The key role that architect and engineer William Scamp R.E. played in the urban reconfiguration of Cospicua is clear. The site was naturally ideal to house a new dock which could accommodate the growing needs of the British naval fleet. Other buildings also accompanied the construction of No. 1 Dock including 'underground coal vaults, timber and metal sheds together with an engine house for the pumping machinery'. (Serracino Inglott, 2015)

Being a product of the Colonialist age, Scamp practised the British Neo-Classical tradition of architecture, creating a perfectly symmetrical arrangement with workshops along both sides of the dock having identical facades facing each other across the dock. On the side of the former Strada Marina, the workshops included a central block inside which was a plater’s shop. The smitheries, one used by the Department of Shipwrights and the other by the Department of Engineers, were on each side of the central block. A small foundry was adjacent to the smithery, and on the other side of the dry dock was a long, narrow block accommodating what were intended as open working sheds. The building is still standing today. (Serracino Inglott, 2015)

The whole area around the dock was subsequently cordoned off.

What was once open urban space was enclosed behind new high walls, in a quasi-symbolic gesture of the magnitude of the Empire’s might. (Serracino Inglott, 2015)

This signified a sharp psychological separation of the local Maltese population from their intimate and ancestral relationship with the sea.

This shift in paradigm was also reflected in the architectural makeup of the edifice. The British neo-classical style was merged with golden Maltese Globigerina limestone, creating a hybrid architecture which characterised many of the buildings constructed during the British period in Malta. Classical proportions were retained and ornamentation adapted to meet contemporary forms of con-
struction. Just as the character of the dock was forged out of steel and sweat, this same industrial nature was reflected in the construction of these new buildings: utilising riveted steel beams to hold up stone ‘voltini ceilings’.

The old market was subsequently demolished in an additional act of reconfiguration in order to make way for extensions to the buildings. This further emphasised the break from the existing maritime trade and fishing character of the site.

These extensions, completed by the end of the nineteenth century, were constructed in such a way so as to blend in seamlessly with the existing context, even employing the same architectural detail. This indeed makes sense since the circumstances under which these extensions were built were the same as those for which the original building was constructed.

Not all changes, however, were detrimental to the locals. British engineers paved the way for effective hygiene systems and comfort within buildings in Malta as is evidenced here by the elaborate drainage system set up here – ‘A larger and better drainage system was introduced in Cospicua at the time. The new system took foul water away from Dockyard Creek, the stench of which had become unbearable, and a cause of deadly disease. Many of the new culverts were placed along the dockyard workshops.’ (Serracino Inglott, 2015) Apart from drainage efficiency, ample light, air ventilation and thermal comfort were guaranteed by British-made buildings.

With the Second World War came much hardship and destruction to the area. Incessant bombing raids by the Luftwaffe razed much of the harbour area to the ground. This dry dock, being a prime target, was not spared. The British Building suffered substantial damage. Large portions of the original structure were destroyed, leaving substantial wartime scars within the building’s fabric.

Over time subsequently and unfortunately:

The integrity of the building façade was compromised with the addition of a number of small rooms housing boilers, wash and storage places. The wide doorways to the boat sheds were narrowed to small doors as their function was changed to a laundry and a battery shop. Post-World War II marked a time of drastic unsympathetic changes to the Scamp buildings. The changes happened as the combined result of damage, obsolescence and the need to cater for changing technology. The balustrade adorning the whole length of the parapet wall was removed and replaced with solid stone walls. The extra height of the original central area of the building was removed, possibly due to the extent of war damage: this single alteration effectively changed the general appearance of the façade. A new floor was built over the extension and used for dining and recreation. This new level was built in an alien style, with different heights and apertures details to what had been designed.
on previous occasions. Instead, a modern/industrial approach was adopted. Moreover, a projecting section, housing the main staircase of the original building designed by Scamp, was taken down to make more space on the dock for machinery. A small staircase tower at the dock’s inlet was also removed. (Serracino Inglott, 2015)

For a considerable time, the buildings remained in disuse and subsequently became dilapidated. With no maintenance work or upkeep, the fabric was left vulnerable to the elements and thus, the whole site became in a bad state of decay.

The AUM project was then undertaken by EM Architects at this point within the building’s timeline. The main guiding philosophy behind the design decisions and alterations made was to harness the historic character of the site. The industrial nature of the building directly stems from its use and is reflected in its construction materials and method. EM Architects sought to continue with this same sentiment but through utilisation of contemporary materials which reflect the technology and construction methods of our time.

This change in materials deployed is an important element in distinguishing what is later addition from original context. As pointed out earlier, buildings have a timeline. As curators of design, architects should never seek to muddle or compress timelines, but rather to make each section apparent and distinguishable whilst at the same time being respectful and sensitive. This delicate balance of intention was mediated via two media: material and proportion.

The extensions to the building, designed by EM Architects, were constructed with slender steel elements (I-beams), crossed steel-cable trusses, large glass panes, metal sheet cladding and concrete floors. These contemporary materials allow the additional floors to sit lightly on top of the existing building. The sturdiness of the existing masonry base coupled with the lightness of the upper floors creates the feeling of firmitas as described in Vitruvius’ De Architectura. The distinction between past and present is highly visual; however, in order for this intervention to tie in with the powerful existing masonry structure, certain architectural language was employed.

Classical proportions based on solid geometry, symmetry, repetition, modules etc. were utilised to create a facade rhythm that flows and is uniform. The elemental means of construction employed for this extension is also reminiscent of the simple construction techniques used in the past where raw structural elements are exposed: further showcasing the industrial prowess of this building. In classical architecture the cornice of a building signifies the delineation between where a building ends and where the sky begins. This formal capping to a building allows the eye to perceive a building as a complete entity. The contemporary cornice clad in steel achieves this whilst also doubling up as an overhang which shields the upper areas of the building from the unrelenting Maltese summer sun. During winter, when the warm rays of sun are less common, light will pass though the large glass panes and fill the areas within. In addition to these architectural language decisions, more obvious acts of restoration were also implemented, thus rectifying all the wrongs which took place during the post-war period of dilapidation.

The building’s interior was also given extensive attention. Previously used to store construction waste and machinery, this double-height shell containing exposed steel beams was converted into an integral part of the campus by including an extra intermediary floor which now houses an IT space with study rooms. The original steel structure was retained and restored, together with the original pumping machinery which is on display and open to the public.

Also relevant at an urban scale is the fact that the British Building’s sister building which mirrored it across the Creek (along Triq l-Inkurunazzjoni) was demolished in the 1970s. This area now acts as a much-needed public open space in the heart of Cospicua and further complements the building as a whole.

Edwin Mintoff, award-winning architect. (Alan Carville)
Thus, the AUM British Building has been allowed to come into its own in the twenty-first century, meeting contemporary needs as a university, whilst also managing to tie in with the historic context of greater Cospicua. EM Architects were awarded the prestigious ‘A’ Design Award & Competition Golden ‘A’ Design Award for the Cultural Heritage and Culture Industry Design Category in 2019 for the British Building in Cospicua, part of the AUM campus.

Dr Edwin Mintoff (founder of EM Architects)

**Singapore’s 250 ton Giant cantilever crane**

The construction and maintenance of battleships demanded costly and specialised facilities. Part of that support infrastructure was the facility to handle the heaviest loads in the construction or repair of such vessels, specifically the turntables which carried the mountings of the main armament. These ranged from about 100 tons in the early 12-inch Dreadnoughts to 150 tons in the 15-inch twin mountings of later classes. Those for *Nelson* weighed 165 tons and the quadruple mountings of the *King George V* class 200 tons.

As late as 1899 and 1900 the Admiralty had specified what by then were anachronistic steam-powered sheerlegs cranes for Devonport and Portsmouth dockyards respectively, and both *Dreadnought* and a number of other battleships received their machinery and armament from these cranes. Given the limited operational ability of sheerlegs – they could traverse the load only in a single plane – a more efficient means of handling loads during fitting-out was demanded, and this coincided both with growing Anglo-German naval rivalry and the introduction of the first Giant cantilever cranes.

The Giant cantilever crane is *not* a hammerhead crane, despite a superficial resemblance between the types. Both are cantilever structures. The difference lies in the method by which dead and live loads are transmitted to the foundations. The hammerhead crane originated in Germany in the late 1890s, and a number were built in capacities up to 350 tons. Only two hammerhead cranes were built for fitting-out in Britain, both by German firms – at Vickers Barrow, and Beardmore at Dalmuir in 1903; another was re-erected at Belfast around 1931 after the liquidation of its original German owner, J.L. Tecklenburg. British firms *never* built hammerhead fitting-out cranes.

The first Giant cantilever crane was completed in the spring of 1905 for the engine works of MacColl & Pollock at Southwick on the River Wear: others followed at the Clydebank shipyard of John Brown, Vickers Barrow, Earle’s, North Eastern Marine, George Clark, and Wallsend Slipway – all commercial firms – ready to take advantage of the cost and time savings in fitting-out promised in this new development.

In June 1909, a 160-ton Giant cantilever crane by Cowans Sheldon was completed at Devonport, the first for the Admiralty, immediately relegating the 1899 sheerlegs to obsolescence in the context of the fitting-out of battleships, and a 250-ton crane followed at Portsmouth in 1912: 250-ton and 100-ton examples were completed at Rosyth in 1917 and 1920 respectively. A 200-ton crane was completed at Woolwich in 1915 and although capable of handling the heaviest contemporary mountings, the island quay on which it was mounted was not capable of accommodating a battleship during fitting out, and so the crane, clearly provided as a means of shipping heavy loads to or from coasters, is not considered in the canon of such cranes for the purposes of this article.

In November 1938, a 250-ton Giant cantilever crane was completed at the Singapore Naval Dockyard. Its completion was unremarkable, and not publicised, but what was remarkable is that it had the shortest working life of any similar structure and consequently is little known. The crane was part of a belated attempt by Britain to establish a dockyard capable of maintaining and repairing a fleet of the largest warships, intended to counter growing Japanese belligerency.

Plans for a major naval dockyard in Singapore had been advanced in the 1920s. However, various periods of enthusiasm for the project alternated with vacillation by successive governments which eventually resulted in a priority to complete the facility once it became apparent that an increasingly aggressive Japanese foreign policy was likely to lead to war. The premise, however, that a Far Eastern fleet of battleships, cruisers and destroyers, supported by significant air cover based on Singapore, was likely to be realised by a Britain forced to concentrate naval resources in the Atlantic and Mediterranean to counter German re-armament under the Nazi regime was simply not a realistic one.
The crane embodied few real advances over the first Arrol 250-ton naval dockyard crane at Portsmouth, and this is not too surprising, for the operational remit of each was the same, to handle the heaviest components likely to be demanded in the construction or repair of battleships – the mountings for the main armament. All other tasks were subservient to this consideration.

The main purchase consisted of two 125-ton hoists which could operate individually or, for heavier loads, could be worked in synchronised unison. A range of less powerful but proportionately faster hoists were fitted, consisting of a 40-ton auxiliary hoist suspended from the 250-ton jenny, and a 10-ton high-speed jigger hoist which operated independently.

The 250-ton maximum load could be handled at a radius of 115 feet, and at the 162.25-feet maximum radius the corresponding load was 120 tons employing both main hoists, or 90 tons on either main hoist singly. The auxiliary hoist could handle 40 tons at any radius up to 170 feet, the jigger hoist was rated at 10 tons at any radius.

A range of hoists was an important consideration in fitting-out cranes, for the process, in battleships for example, demanded many hundreds of loads up to about five or ten tons, which could be rapidly handled; perhaps a hundred loads up to thirty or forty tons (holding on to armour plate whilst it was being set up being prominent here), and a relatively small number of loads above this, which nevertheless defined the ultimate lifting capacity of the crane. These factors also applied in commercial shipbuilding, especially where large liners are considered.

A special quality of Giant cantilever cranes was their high structural integrity, a result of which was a low amplitude of vibration and consequent low pulsation of the load – essential qualities where heavy and valuable components had to be placed with great precision. In addition, these cranes incorporated mechanisms by which the lowering speed on the main hoist could be reduced to the extent that it was almost imperceptible to the naked eye – an additional special quality. A testimony to this combination of qualities was recognised in the selection of Giant cantilever cranes for the handling of submarine nuclear reactors as late as 1965 for Rosyth Dockyard, and in 1972 for Chatham, each of 120-tonnes capacity and both built by Stothert & Pitt.

The contract for the crane was awarded to Sir William Arrol & Co Ltd, of Glasgow, and their cost books record a sum of £113,360 8s to which a margin of profit would be added. Arrol’s were the pre-eminent builders of these cranes – building more than any other company and almost half of the world total.

Photographs of the construction of such cranes are very rare, and it is fortunate indeed that Dr Miles Oglethorpe, of the then Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historic Monuments in Scotland, was able to rescue the extensive photographic records of Sir William Arrol & Co. from the derelict works in the 1980s. Those from that valuable collection presented here are by kind permission of Historic Environment Scotland.

Of great interest is the photograph of the slewing curb being drilled and reamed for fitting-bolts in the Dunn Street Works. This graphically illustrates the great size of and complexity of these structures. Equally impressive for the same reason is the view of one complete panel for the tower of the Singapore crane temporarily assembled in the Nuneaton Street works.

The Japanese invasion of the Malay peninsula did not come as a complete surprise to the British, but such was the poorly coordinated forces assembled in the area, and the need to prioritise the prosecution of the war in Europe against Germany and Italy, that the defence of the peninsula, and especially Singapore, was never likely to have a successful outcome.

The capture of the dockyard in February 1942 was a strategic objective for the invading forces, no doubt wishing to secure it in an undamaged condition. However, British Army units frustrated this ambition and carried out a number of major demolitions before the enemy could secure the base. These included the scuttling of a 150-ton floating crane and floating dock AFD 9, destroying the gates and pumps of the graving dock, and setting alight the oil tanks intended to keep the putative fleet fuelled and at sea. They also used explosive charges to cut the outboard legs of the crane tower, which caused the structure to collapse into the basin machinery-house first, completely destroying it. A photograph from Japanese sources showing the result of this is reproduced in one publication, Singapore: The Japanese Version (Masanobu Tsugi, Sydney, 1960), opp. p. 262.

When I visited the Sembawang yard at Singapore in 1987 all physical evidence of the crane had been effaced, as had any documentary evidence which must have existed in the yard during the
Above: One of the tower panels for the crane erected.
Below: Top of the tower set up and being drilled and reamed in position.
The crane undergoing commissioning tests in November 1938 lifting a load of 312 tons at a radius of 115 feet. I was later informed (by the Singapore National Archives) that all of the documentary records of the dockyard were removed by the British authorities prior to independence.

Objectively, the story of the Singapore crane is but a tiny chapter in the long history of Britain’s naval dockyards both at home and across the Empire. W. H. Atheron neatly summed up the unique status of these rare and somehow mysterious structures when he wrote:

There are not a large number of Giant cranes in existence throughout the whole world. The construction of a new Giant is a fine piece of engineering work which is not often repeated. The birth of a Giant is probably a rarer event than the launch of a big Atlantic liner. Also, a Giant has a long life. It does not wear out or become obsolescent in a matter of a quarter of a century, as a liner does. Consequently, the construction of Giant cranes is never likely to become a regular routine business but will doubtless remain the exceptional or occasional job of a very few firms possessing a suitable works organization and equipment. (Hoisting Machinery, W. H. Atherton (London, 1940), p. 196)
And so ended the existence of the Singapore Giant cantilever crane – the shortest working life of all of the cranes of this type, and in that context it is perhaps ironic that two British-built Giant cantilever cranes of great age continue to work every day in largely original condition in Japan, at Nagasaki (1909) and Sasebo (1913), whilst a third, at Yokohama (1913), is preserved as an historic monument.

The final Giant cantilever crane constructed to serve battleships in the British Empire was that at Garden Island, Sydney, the construction of which started in 1943 but was not completed until around 1952 by which time the battleship had been relegated to the second rank of naval strategy. This crane, a close copy of the Singapore crane was demolished in the summer of 2014.

Dr Brian Newman

Acknowledgements

I am deeply indebted to Dr Miles Oglethorpe and Miriam McDonald of successively The Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments in Scotland, and Historic Environment Scotland, for their generosity in granting access to what at the time, was an unsorted collection of many dozens of boxes of photographs of the products of Sir William Arrol & Co., and for numerous other kindnesses over the years.

Submarines at Fremantle

Fremantle in Western Australia was the Allies’ second largest operating submarine base worldwide from 1942, when USN submarines moved there almost in desperation as the Japanese took over much of the Pacific. Three RN submarine flotillas arrived in September 1944 with their depot ship HMS Maidstone. The following year the 14th Submarine Squadron arrived, comprising XE midget submarines which were used to cut underwater cables and sank some Japanese heavy units. In all, submarines conducted 416 war patrols from Fremantle before hostilities ended in 1945: 5.5 million tons of enemy shipping was sunk or damaged. Cooperation between the RN and USN was apparently very good. The massive submarine operation was a closely kept secret, not obvious to the local populace and only revealed in full after VJ Day.

Commemorating these operations in the Western Australian Maritime Museum is the former HMAS Ovens, see image below. An Oberon-class submarine, she was commissioned in 1969 and was donated to the museum in 1998.

Richard Holme
A strange security guard in Sheerness Dockyard

‘In visiting the copper store-rooms the other day, there was introduced to my notice a watchman who does duty night and day without receiving either pay or provisions, which is not the only quality which makes him valuable to lovers of economy, as he neither plunders himself nor suffers others to do so. A more ancient but at the same time more efficient “charley” can scarcely be found. To speak plainly, this protector of public property is an ingenious piece of machinery, consisting of a painting on wood, which is placed in a position commanding a view of the store-room. It resembles a door in form, and presents at first the figure of a grenadier with the pointed cap and grotesque uniform of olden time, bearing a musket and standing in the attitude of a sentinel. The moment any person touches or picks up anything in the room, whether it be a bolt or a socket, or piece of pipe, or any other article in the place, the door turns on a pivot and in going round sounds an alarm bell, and gives warnings to the store keepers to be on the alert. The grenadier appears again, but he has changed his appearance, his musket is grounded and his countenance indicates a determination not to be trifled with. If the attempt to remove any of the stores is repeated, he turns again and gives a second signal, and thus he continues to act as often as anyone displaces the smallest article. The painting itself is said to be upwards of a hundred years old but it is not of a very choice description. It is admired because of the purpose to which it is applied and valued on account of the effect it produces among the workmen, for since this guard has been mounted peculation in the copper store-room has been almost unknown, and it is believed could not escape detection. The artisans and labourers employed in the dockyard seem to have more dread of this automaton policeman than they would of many who, though appearing to possess intelligence, are but automata. The inventor of the machine is one of the storekeepers, but he keeps the secret of its motion to himself notwithstanding that the Lords of the Admiralty, Lord Lyndhurst, and other persons of high rank, who have witnessed its gyrations, have much wished to have their curiosity on this point gratified. The contriver however rightly judges that the whole value of his watchman is dependent upon the close custody of the secret of its principle of action. There is only one spring perceptible in the joints of the stone flooring, and this is pointed out to the visitor, who may cause the figure to turn by pressing with the right foot, but the effect cannot be produced by using the left. This spring however is only a device, or at least a poor apology for not unravelling the mystery; for let a person stand where he may and touch any of the property, he is sure to be detected.’ (The Times, 20 October 1840, p5).

The above was kindly supplied by David Hughes who also noted a visit in 1858 by Prince Adalbert of Prussia. It seems a visit to the ‘robot guard’ was a major attraction for prominent visitors.

‘The Prince was highly amused in the copper store room by an ingenious piece of mechanism erected there, termed the storekeeper’s tell-tale, as on the Prince touching any one article and taking it from the shelves the figure door immediately swung round, changed position and rang the alarm bell.’ (The Times, 28 January 1858).

NDS Awards Grants for Dockyard Heritage

Through the hard work of committee members and the generosity of members, the Naval Dockyards Society has accumulated a small surplus of funds beyond those needed for forthcoming publications. The 2020 AGM agreed that this could be used to support small dockyard museum or dockyard heritage site projects. The Society agreed to make available five grants of £1,000 each, which would be awarded to the best projects that helped fulfil the Society’s constitution, aim and specific objectives.

Bodies such as not-for-profit organisations with 0 to 5 employed staff or a society with volunteers and an elected committee, with a constitution, annual member meetings and annual accounts, were eligible. It was felt that grants could make a real difference to the future enhancement of worthy museums or sites.

Applications were judged by two members of the NDS Conservation Sub-Committee (Ann Coats and Paul Brown) and an external assessor. Five applications were received and were evaluated using
a multiple criteria scoring scheme. Fortunately, all five projects were deemed worthy of support; in some cases, advice was given (in feedback to the applicants) on how the project might be enhanced to help fulfil the Society’s objectives.

A brief outline of each project is given below. A report will be given in future Dockyards of the projects’ outcomes on completion of each project. In some cases, interim reports on progress may also be made available.

**Bluetown Remembered (Sheerness)**

The project will be a part of ongoing work to raise the profile of Sheerness Dockyard and Bluetown heritage. The group have been working on this for over eleven years and now have a three-storey heritage centre with one floor dedicated to Sheerness Dockyard. They aim to preserve and promote this heritage through education, entertainment, and enthusiasm and have over 20,000 visitors each year.

Sheppey’s history hasn’t been taught in schools for several generations, so parents and children are unaware of the importance of the dockyard, which is hidden behind an exceptionally large wall. A pilot has been undertaken with one school’s Year 4, which visited the dockyard as part of an island tour and then interpreted the information into many topics to form an exhibition at the school. This was so successful that all the schools in Sheppey want to replicate this and to this end the centre is working with all the deputy heads. The NDS grant will fund enhancement of the group’s school resources with a booklet on Sheerness Dockyard. The children bring back their parents and grandparents to the centre, which is part of two Kent-wide schemes, Wheels of Time and the Children’s University, bringing in families from all over the county.

The grant will also finance six monthly lectures about the dockyard and Bluetown to encourage history groups to visit as well as locals. Preshow tours of the island and the dockyard will be used to help promote the dockyard to this wider audience. Special events for care homes will also be hosted. The ‘Bluetown Remembered’ building was a music hall, and later cinema, originally built in 1841 and as part of the project it will show a film linked or filmed around the dockyard and Bluetown.

**The Dockyard Museum at the Antigua Naval Dockyard**

The Dockyard Museum has developed a multidisciplinary research, interpretation, and public outreach programme titled ‘8 March Project’ under the theme ‘Dockyard History is African History’, to recover and interpret archival and archaeological evidence of the enslaved and free Africans and their descendants who made the naval dockyard at Antigua possible. The African history of the dockyard is a major interpretive gap.

The dockyard was established in 1725. Enslaved Africans were conscripted from plantations and sent to form the core of the labour force building the first careening wharf and infrastructure. Of the present Georgian buildings in the dockyard, all but one were built using slave labour. The Royal Navy also purchased skilled enslaved Africans as part of the permanent yard workforce. Known as the ‘King’s Negroes’, they filled every skilled position, including shipwrights, caulkers, house carpenters, sailmakers, and blacksmiths. Boys, some as young as twelve, were occasionally purchased and trained as apprentices and servants to replenish the workforce. After emancipation freedmen continued to work in the dockyard until its closure in the 1890s.

The ’8 March Project’ began with the identification of eight enslaved Africans who lost their lives in an explosion on 8 March 1744. These names were used to launch a project to recover more names of enslaved Africans who worked in the yard, and more than 650 names have been recovered.

In 2021 the dockyard museum will launch an expanded interpretive programme including creative works by students from the Antigua State College and the local Cobbs Cross Primary School. Students will be brought to the dockyard to tell the stories of the enslaved workers there. They will use these stories and research as creative inspiration in their art courses. Their artwork will be exhibited in a gallery in the dockyard, with historical interpretation from the Dockyard Museum, throughout March. Primary students, along with a local spoken-word artist, will perform a commissioned piece commemorating the enslaved and free Africans who worked in the dockyard. The
students will bring parents and grandparents. The programme will be broadcast on state and private media and shared on social media pages.

The grant will help with purchasing art supplies for the Antigua State College Students and provide refreshments for our participants. By involving students, we will increase the visibility of both the history of the dockyard for Antiguans and Barbudans, and the project’s research agenda, including oral histories, genealogies, and archaeology. Afterwards any donated artwork and interpretation panels will be incorporated into a Dockyard Museum exhibit. The new ‘African History Tour’ of the dockyard will incorporate the gallery and exhibit, ensuring that the project continues to be in the forefront of how the dockyard is interpreted to visitors.

**Museum of Slavery and Freedom, Deptford**

This is an embryonic organisation, which aspires to acquire permanent premises, working alongside Action for Community Development in Deptford. The project, ‘Chip on Your Shoulder’, will combine Deptford Dockyard naval history and the Museum of Slavery and Freedom (MoSaF) to provide the vehicle through which a number of its key objectives will be delivered. It will be based in Deptford, using the Pepys Resource Centre as an anchor hub for tours of the museum to begin and end and associated equipment required. Deptford is significant as it was home to John Hawkins, who became the first English slave-trader. MoSaF will demonstrate how Deptford, London and the whole of the United Kingdom grew rich from the slave trade but also explore the extent to which freedom from slavery was won and celebrate the many cultures and peoples who live in the UK as a consequence of it. The Lenox Project has kindly offered £500 to help fund this project.

The provision of age-appropriate history tours and community engagement will include telling the story of Deptford Dockyard, how Deptford Dockyard supported maritime communities, and how Deptford Dockyard links to the African, Irish and Asian diaspora. A majority of the people who live and work in Deptford and surrounding areas are unaware of the social, economic, cultural and naval history of this area including the interconnecting points linking the Atlantic slave trade. This funding will fuse and connect (dialogues on the sea dogs, seafarers and the South Sea bubble) opportunities around naval history and slavery which have been hidden. This will provide local people with a sense of social, economic and naval history thus empowering self-worth and place of belonging.

**Sheerness Dockyard Preservation Trust (SDPT)**

SDPT was founded in 2014 to campaign for the preservation of the historic buildings in and around the former Royal Dockyard at Sheerness. The Trust’s main focus has been on the rescue, repair and reuse of the Grade II* listed former Dockyard Church, built in 1828 to the designs of George Ledwell Taylor, Surveyor to the Admiralty, to serve the officers and workers of the newly constructed dockyard. In 2001 it was gutted by fire and all that remains today is the shell of this once magnificent building, which played such an important role in the dockyard and the Sheerness community.
Over the past three years the Trust has developed a project to restore and conserve the building whilst converting its interior to a mixed-use community facility, incorporating an events space, a business incubator centre for young people, and a permanent display gallery to house at least part of the famous dockyard model, which will be conserved with accompanying interpretation. The dockyard model will play a significant part in informing the public of the history of the dockyard and the church’s place in that community. The NDS grant will contribute towards the interpretation and conservation of the model.

The church as it stands is a derelict building with four walls propped with scaffolding and no roof. SDPT has been awarded a grant of £4,216,100 from National Lottery Heritage Fund and has raised the remaining funds to meet the budget of £7,922,000 from trusts, foundations and individual donors.

The Unicorn Preservation Society (Project title: ‘Robert Seppings, the Industrial Revolution & HMS Unicorn’)

2022 will see the 200th anniversary of the keel-laying of the Robert Seppings designed frigate HMS Unicorn on No. 4 slip at Chatham, the roof of which is also a Seppings design. The end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century saw the coming together of a number of factors which impacted on the way in which ships were constructed, and hence on the operation of the yards where they were built. These included:

• a shortage of timber due to the expansion of naval shipbuilding during the Napoleonic Wars
• the limitations of timber as a structural material which was restricting the size of ships that could be built
• new production methods which resulted in the increased availability of wrought iron of consistent quality capable of being shaped in rolling mills
• new manufacturing technologies such as those introduced by Maudslay & Brunel for block making based around precision machinery
• the development of steam propulsion.

Chief among Seppings’ structural innovations were the use of wrought-iron diagonal straps in the hold to increase the torsional stiffness of the hull and the replacement of wooden knees by wrought iron, offering greater strength at less weight. HMS Unicorn is now the only remaining ship which fully illustrates Seppings’ approach.
The grant will be used in association with other funding to facilitate:

- An exhibition linking the Industrial Revolution and ship design and construction. Whilst focusing on Seppings and Unicorn, it will also illustrate how these developments impacted on shipbuilding in Dundee, including on ships such as RRS Discovery, also berthed in Dundee, and on naval dockyards. It will draw on previous work carried out by Unicorn to establish oral histories of those who worked in the Dundee shipyards.

- The development of a ‘learning box’ linked to relevant school curricula capable of being used on board Unicorn and taken to schools to illustrate issues associated with ship construction and dockyards. This will include models based on Seppings’ own demonstrations to the Royal Society and working models of the Seppings block system, developed while he was at Plymouth Dockyard.

- A programme of community engagement and outreach primarily, but not exclusively, associated with the 200th anniversary of the laying-down of the keel.

- A research visit to Chatham Dockyard by the project administrator to investigate relevant correspondence centred around, but not exclusive to, Seppings and Unicorn.

Dr Paul Brown

Note by editor: This is a much-expanded version of a short email sent to members in September. All photos are courtesy of the organisations concerned.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

27 March 2021
AGM and Conference at Greenwich: ‘Dockyards and Baltic campaigns 1721–2021’.
A call for papers is included in this newsletter.

10–12 June 2021
Joint International Conference at Portsmouth: ‘Dockyards as modes of naval architecture, maritime traditions and cultural heritage’ (working title). In partnership with the Society for Nautical Research and supported by Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust and the National Museum of the Royal Navy, this ground-breaking international conference will address three themes:
1. Building a ship-of-the-line or warship
2. Dockyards as heritage
3. Dockyards as global hubs and regional centres of maritime culture.
It will include specialist behind-the-scenes archive and dockyard visits and a harbour tour.
CALL FOR PAPERS

NDS Conference: 27 March 2021
National Maritime Museum Greenwich
Dockyards and Baltic Campaigns (1721–2021): Comparisons and Transformations

This one-day conference will examine the role of the naval dockyards and bases that were closely associated with Baltic naval campaigns. 1721 was the year that the Great Northern War was finally concluded. The key dockyards in this war were Copenhagen, Karlskrona, Chatham, St Petersburg and Kronstadt. Britain’s concern was to maintain the balance of power, sending large squadrons into the Baltic to ensure the continued supply of naval stores: especially Russian hemp, Swedish iron and ‘East Country’ timber.

Other conflicts, such as those in the Thirty Years War 1618–48, the Second Baltic War 1655–60, the Russo-Swedish war 1788–90, the 1918–20 Russian civil war, two World Wars and the twentieth century Baltic states’ wars of liberation are also within the scope of this conference.

If your proposal is accepted, the NDS will pay standard UK travel expenses (not international flights), your conference fee and lunch, publish it in our Transactions and give you a complimentary copy. Your talk will be 20–40 minutes. The published paper will be 6–10K words long, required six months after the Conference for editing.

Please send your title and 300-word synopsis (and any queries) as soon as possible to Dr Paul Brown, paul.brown206@btinternet.com.