

# Friends of the Newport Ship

Registered Charity No 1105449

[www.newportship.org](http://www.newportship.org)



## News: November 2014

### Thanks to Peter!



It is with great reluctance that the FONS Committee said farewell to our Chairman, Peter Hayward, at the 2014 AGM. Peter's combination of cheery optimism, clarity of thought, excellent organisational skills and much determination has steered us through a number of problems and crises in the last three years.

Peter wishes to remain as a volunteer and seems determined to help out where he can. We all wish him well for the future, whatever challenges he decides to take on.

### KEN SKATES AM



In the September News Sheet Mr. Skates, the Member for Clwyd South in the National Assembly, was named as "Mr. Sykes". We apologise to him for this error. As he is now the Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism, his brief covers the Medieval Newport Ship Project; so we hope he will accept our apology!

## COMMITTEE 2014 -2015

Elected at the 2014 AGM.

<b>Chair;</b>	Philip Cox
<b>Vice-Chair;</b>	Alan Aberg
<b>Secretary;</b>	Sian King
<b>Treasurer;</b>	Jean Gray*

### **Other elected**

<b>Members;</b>	Jeff Brooks
	Charles Ferris (Patron)
	Rosi Hollister
	Alan Smith
	Emma Routley

<b>Co-opted Members</b>	Rhys Brooks (Webmaster)
	Sheila Dyke
	Bob Trett (Newsletter editor)

\* Jean is fulfilling the post in a temporary capacity, but would welcome a full-time replacement!

## Trade between the West of England and Iberia in the Age of the Newport Ship

This talk was given by Dr AJ (Toby) Parker on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2014 to the Newport Civic Society. The talk was attended by several members of the FONS.

Dr Parker centred his presentation on the following points.

From the contents of the bilge, it is evident that the Newport Medieval Ship was engaged in trade with the Iberian Peninsula. Particular seeds including Juniper Gorse and Portuguese Crowberries highlight the last season that the ship traded, along with the traces of the cargoes of fruit, spices and exotic goods that were carried on her last voyage.

Newport has a natural 'port' landscape, with a clear river entrance and markers up the estuary into the harbour area. Ships would have used the tides to ease their movement in and out of the port area, using oars and sails to keep position within the flow. The riverfront has clearly been used for centuries as muddy berths for vessels that would sit on the mud, propped against the harbour walls for support. The port area would have been

controlled by harbour commissioners who would ensure that levies, taxes and customs duties were paid.

The Bristol Channel, also known in medieval times as the Severn Sea, is still renowned for its short and choppy seas, causing vessels to seek shelter in adverse weather conditions. The approach to Bristol, gives only limited shelter in the lee of Portishead Point in what was known as 'Kings Road' anchorage. The approach to Newport is more sheltered from westerly winds and this could have encouraged the master of our ship to enter the Usk for repairs rather than going onwards to Bristol. His decision might also have been coloured by the considerably lesser port fees in Newport.

Two key cargoes of the time were Portuguese and southern Spanish wine (and there is good evidence of this in the barrel staves and merchants marks found in our own Ship) and pilgrims, who may have taken passage in our Ship on their way to the Shrine of St. James at Santiago de Compostela.

Other records from 1530 show that iron was being imported into Bristol from the Basque country in both ingots and slender bars, with this then being shipped onwards, possibly through Newport for reworking. Unfortunately, there seems to be no evidence that our Ship was involved in this trade. One of the problems in assessing the extent of Newport's seaborne trade is the lack of written records dealing with it.

## **Forthcoming events.**

### **Wednesday 3rd December 2015, St Julian Inn at 7:30 PM**

*"Victory for Freedom, Defeat into slavery. The Silurian War" a living history debate with Cyfarwydd:Heritage with Passion*

*The Roman war machine was one of the most formidable military outfits conquering much of the known world, and devastating opposing armies, it seemed that few could hope to stop the advance of the empire at the height of its power. Yet in the 1st century, a local tribal confederation, the Silures, managed to withhold the Roman advance into what we today know as Wales. The military tactics of the Silures stopped Rome in its tracks, and led to one of the most significant guerrilla wars to take place on British soil. Who were the real heroes and villains of this lengthy war? In a "live" historical debate, two very different perspectives on the Silurian war will be put forward. Verdun Howells and David R. Howell will present opposing accounts of the military engagements which took place between the advancing Roman armies and the native Silurian forces. Who was in the right? who were the real heroes? come meet those who were there, who fought for their beliefs in this epic live historical debate*

### **Wednesday 7th January 2015, St Julian Inn at 7.30 pm**

*Jack the Ripper:* Our own time-travelling doctor, Roger Morgan presents his investigations into the 'Ripper' and his victims.

## **Wednesday 4th February 2015, St Julian Inn at 7.30 pm**

*The Holgar Experience* by James Harding. James will be telling us of the amazing project (sponsored by the Discovery Channel) to move a Pembrokeshire bluestone by sea to Bristol en route to **Stonehenge**.

## **Wednesday 4th March 2015, St Julian Inn at 7.30 pm**

*The evacuation of Dunkirk* by Roger James.

## **Wednesday 1st April 2015, St Julian Inn at 7.30 pm**

*Trows, and the Hereford Bull boat* by Colin Green. In this the last talk of this season, we go out in style, elegantly and serenely, learning about craft from a gentler era.

.....and lastly for this edition;

## **Cutty Sark Visit; May 2015.**

## **Friday 8th May 2015, FONS embers visit to the Cutty Sark and Greenwich Royal Observatory.**



This year's trip will be a full day trip to Greenwich to visit the fabulous Cutty Sark, recently raised up to provide a fabulous new museum below her hull. We will be shown round by the project's curator, Jessica Lewis to give us new insights into how the museum displays its artefacts. We also have the opportunity to straddle the meridian at the Royal Observatory from which navigators calculate their positions around the world.

**Tickets will be priced at around £40 per adult, £38 senior and £31 for under 12's. To reserve your place on the bus, contact Phil Cox on 01633 810209 or email at [chair@newportship.org](mailto:chair@newportship.org), and send a £10 deposit to him at 5 Goodrich Grove, Newport, NP10 8SY.**