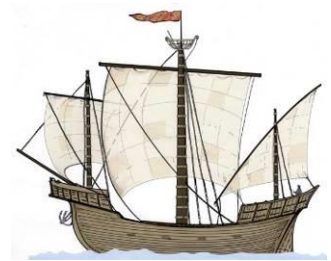


Friends of the Newport Ship

Registered Charity No 1105449

www.newportship.org



News: January 2015

A Happy New Year to the Ship (and to all of us)!

Hello Unit 20!

The Project has now moved from Unit 22 at Maesglas to Unit 20 on the Queensway Meadows Industrial Estate. The address is:

Unit 20, Estuary Road,
Queensway Meadows Industrial
Estate
Newport, South Wales, NP19 4SP

Unit 20 is much smaller than Unit 22 but, as we were latterly using only half of Unit 22, the change in scale may not be that dramatic.



Many thanks to the FONS volunteers, to the team from Newport Museum and Art Gallery and to Penybryn Engineering who helped to move timbers and artefacts into the project's new home.

Chairman's Update

It has been a very busy couple of months since the last newsletter in November. The big news is that our Ship has moved into its new home – it's not its final resting place, but a warehouse where the conservation project can be continued until such time as all the timbers are fully dried out and ready for reassembly, which should take at least another 3 years.

The furore over the proposals to close the Newport Museum and Art Gallery has hit the headlines and many of our members have signed up to the petition to encourage the Council to think again. The proposal is ill-thought out and puts the collections held by the museum and art gallery in jeopardy – including our own collection of timbers which are nominally held by the museum. We are working with the Friends of Newport Museum and Art Gallery (FoNMAG) and other local organisations to improve the heritage offering across Newport and South East Wales.

The Business Planning process is continuing and we are updating our draft Business Plan with the comments that we have received back from far and wide. Many thanks to everybody who responded to the consultation – all your comments are being reviewed and will be considered. The final version will be published in due course – watch this space!

Forthcoming Events

We are currently planning events for the year to come. We are hoping to be able to open the Ship Centre on a regular basis (at least 3 days per week) from late spring or early summer, and have a full programme of other events that we will attend.

We will need far more volunteers to efficiently man the rota we aim to set up at Unit 20.

Please see the “Volunteer Vacancies” item below and let us know if you can help out in any way.

Other events to watch out for are the FONS participation in the Agincourt 600 to mark the famous medieval battle.

Special events: One Open Day will have a Construction Focus; which should be of interest to a wide range of potential visitors.

The Project Curator and several members of the FONS are available to give talks to organised groups, if necessary across the country, to spread the word about the Project, its history, its progress and our aspirations. We do ask for a reasonable donation to cover our expenses, but we will also bring along our ‘Ship Shop’ giving everybody an opportunity to buy mementos of the Medieval Ship Project.

Winter Prize Draw Winners

The winners of the 2014 Winter Prize Draw, which was held on Thursday 11 December, were drawn by the Mayor of Newport, Matthew Evans and the Lady Mayoress.

Celtic Manor D+BB: Richard Green, Isle of Man
Celtic Manor Golf day for 4: Frank Cook, Monmouth
Celtic Manor Spa day for 2: Mrs. P Leng, Tunbridge Wells, Kent
Sainsbury's voucher £80: Margaret Morgan, Abergavenny
Original Watercolour Painting (Tall Ship) by Alun Edwards: Lynda Pidgeon, Swindon
Cutty Sark trip for 2: Steve Taylor, Caerleon
Wildings voucher £10: Andrew Jones, Newport
Bottle of rum: Mr. Wallace, Chepstow

We would like to thank Jean Gray, the Draw Promoter for the Friends of Newport Ship for her efforts in organising and arranging the draw, and all those members and friends who sold tickets for us.

The Draw raised £1,550 towards our target of £100,000 this year which will be used to create the new charitable trust that will eventually take over the Medieval Newport Ship project and get that organisation up and running and sustainable as it seeks to raise the really big money needed for the building of the museum that will house the re-constructed Ship.

The next Draw that we will be running is part of the Uskmouth Rotary Spring Draw when our target is to raise a further £2,000. Tickets will be available from mid-February until mid-April. Watch out for more details in the next Newsletter and on the FoNS website (www.newportship.org)

Cuts and Interviews

The proposed closure of the Newport Museum and Art Gallery as a “saving” caused a large number of FONS members to support an anti-closure petition circulated on Change.com. The proposal created some concern among our members for the future of the Ship Project. We are able to reassure everyone that the Project is safe for the next three years, mainly due to the injection of £60,000 by the Welsh government to cover Unit 20's rental cost to the end of 2017.

The furore coincided with the move from Unit 22 and seems to have spurred S4C and BBC Wales into action to interview Phil Cox and Rhys Brooks in a bi-lingual item broadcast on S4C's ‘Newyddion’, plus the use of Phil's contribution on the BBC's ‘Wales Today’. “Audience reaction” to the interviews was very positive and it all helps to maintain our profile!

Medieval Newport Diorama

The "Ship" diorama; (a 3D representation of mid-15th Century Newport), is now on display in the foyer of the University of South Wales building on the river bank near to Newport Leisure Centre. Many thanks to Bob Trett for his research, to Ann Leaver for her original painting which formed the basis of the diorama and to Charles Ferris, whose idea it was and who persuaded your rather sceptical committee to support it!



The diorama is well worth a visit! The Medieval Newport Ship is at top left.

Special General Meeting

Following the Special General Meeting on 7th January 2015, we are delighted to announce that Peter Horleston has been elected as the new FONS treasurer, taking over from Jean Gray who has been carrying out this role so well for many years. I'm sure you will be glad to hear that Jean remains on the Committee as Retail Officer.

Support (and poems) from Gillian Clarke



Gillian Clarke, the National Poet of Wales and member of the Gorsedd of Bards is one of the most fervent of Ship's supporters. On the tenth anniversary of the ship's discovery she penned the beautiful poem "The Newport Ship" which was published in the anthology of poetry called "ICE". She very kindly allowed the poem to be used by the Friends for our merchandising and we have since produced postcards, greetings cards and posters which are on sale at Open Days and Curator Talks.

We have kept her in touch with the trials and tribulations we have endured during the last few months when the new premises have always seemed just out of reach. She has been there with cheery words of encouragement and faith that all would be well. She is as overjoyed as we are that we are safely ensconced in our latest premises, so much so that she wants to do something else to help us. When we are settled and it feels like "home" she will be giving a poetry reading especially in our honour. We choose the venue, the date and time then lo and behold - one of the world's greatest poets will arrive and be magnificent! Just for us. We are so excited by this!

Keep an eye on our website and the local press for details. You are all invited!

Departures

It is with great regret that the FONS have learned of the death of two of our staunchest supporters;

Steve Taylor. Steve was a well known broadcaster on ITV Wales and, after retiring, worked as a battlefield tour guide in Flanders. Steve was a supporter of the Medieval Newport Ship Project from its earliest days and was always keen to publicise the Ship in whatever venue he found himself. Steve was a St Julian's High School old boy who joined the Argus as a junior reporter in the 1960's. He went on to work as a reporter for BBC Radio Gwent and BBC Radio Wales before becoming a newscaster for HTV in 1992 where he remained until 2006. During his tenure at HTV the Medieval Newport Ship was discovered and Steve, with the assistance of cameraman Jerry Cross, gave excellent news and documentary coverage of the discovery and the campaign to save the vessel from destruction. The publicity secured by their efforts greatly helped in alerting people to the plight of the Ship.

The Friends of the Medieval Newport Ship are grateful for Steve's efforts, remember him warmly and send our sincere sympathy to his family.

Katy Kelly helped out at almost every open day during the last four years and would take on almost any task; very valuable on days when we were short of volunteers. Always quietly cheerful, she will be missed when we are able to open to the public once more and the Friends send their condolences to her family.

Ship Shop

We are currently reviewing our retail stock, and are open to suggestions from the membership as to what items they would like to see stocked, subject to cost and availability. We now have copies of the Poetry Booklet produced as a result of last summer's Poetry Competition, and a new CD of music composed and performed by FoNS Member Kelvin Reddicliffe and friends.

New outlets for Ship memorabilia are being sought

Volunteer Vacancies

To help staff the Ship Centre during regular opening hours, we will need volunteers to come and help out on a regular basis.

Guides, (training will be provided) to help visitors appreciate the Ship and our plans for the vessel. They should also be able to provide suggestions and information about other tourism sites around Newport.

Receptionists to welcome visitors to the Ship Centre

Retail Assistants to sell items from the Ship Shop to visitors.

We are going to need far more volunteers if we are to run our new Ship Centre successfully and would be grateful for any time you can spare to help the Project. Please contact secretary@newportship.org if you are able to help.

And lastly for this edition.....

Winter talks....

Wednesday 4th February; St Julian Inn, 7.30 p.m.

“The Holgar Experience”. James Harding recounts the amazing task of moving a Pembrokeshire bluestone from the Preseli Hills on the “Holgar”, a replica of a Bronze Age ship (below) by sea to Bristol en route to Stonehenge.



Wednesday 4th March; St Julian Inn, 7.30 p.m.

“The Evacuation of Dunkirk”; a talk by Roger James.

Wednesday 1st April; St. Julian Inn, 7.30 p.m.

“Trows and the Hereford Bull Boat”; In the last talk of the season Colin Green will talk about the work of the Trows along the river Severn and the building of the Hereford Bull boat (below).

