

Dates for your diary

There's plenty going on through the winter. The pub talks at St Julian's on the third Wednesday of the month are always popular, but in addition we've secured a special speaker for our AGM, and there will be a public Open Day at the Ship Centre in December with a Christmas theme. Don't forget the Christmas dinner either.

The pub talks take place in the skittles alley in the basement of St Julian's Inn, Caerleon Road (between junction 25 of the M4 and Caerleon). They start promptly at 7.30pm, so please arrive in good time before that. Sandwiches and crisps will be available after the talk. Admission is free, though we ask for a donation towards the cost of the food.

If you have any questions about these events, please contact Peter Hayward on 01600 712864 or peter@hwd.me.uk.

Wednesday 19th October

7.30pm at St Julian's Inn
Francis Maxey: To the Sinai and Beyond
Francis undertook this 7000 mile solo motorcycle journey in memory of Kate Hunter, formerly the Ship Project Leader. He was raising funds for Marie Curie Cancer Care, and many of you may have made a donation.

Saturday 29th October

2.00pm at Malpas Court
AGM, followed by Dr Deanna Groom: Reclaiming History from the Sea – shipwreck heritage around the Welsh Coast. Deanna is the Maritime Officer at the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales. We're delighted she has agreed to come down from Aberystwyth to talk about her work in developing the historical maritime record for Wales.

Wednesday 16th November

7.30 pm at St Julian's Inn
Jeff Brooks: Lancastria – the secret disaster
Jeff has been an active member of the Committee of the Friends since the outset. He

will tell us about the worst shipping disaster in British history and how it was kept secret from the public.

Saturday 3rd December

11.00am to 4.00pm at Maesglas
Open Day at the Ship Centre
This Open Day will have a Christmas theme.

Saturday 10th December

8.00 for 8.30pm at Junction 28 restaurant, Bassaleg
Christmas dinner
This annual event is always very sociable and enjoyable, but advance booking with deposit is necessary. To book, please contact Rosi Hollister on 0771 311 3935 by 7th November, or see her at one of the meetings in October.

Wednesday 18th January

7.30pm at St Julian's Inn
Chill out after Christmas!
No talk this evening, but a chance to socialise with other members in the ground floor bar. No food provided, but order your own meal at the bar.

Wednesday 15th February

7.30 pm at St Julian's Inn
Emma Lewis: Ports in South Wales – past, present and future. Emma, Chair of the Friends, has extensive experience working in Welsh ports.

Wednesday 21st March

7.30pm at St Julian's Inn
Jeff Smith: The Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal.
Jeff is a lifelong enthusiastic supporter of the canal and its conservation.

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Newport Castle and Medieval ship

A painting by David Day.

No. 19

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Charity Number 1105449

- An update by Toby Jones
- News from Emma Routley
- Trial new technology by Erica McCarthy
- Marie Jordan
- Naming the Newport Ship by Bob Trett
- Warden Pears by Trish Hayward
- IKUWA Conference by Erica McCarthy
- Gaming on board the Newport Ship by Morwenna Perrott
- Conservation news by Marie Jordan

The views given in this newsletter are those of the contributors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Friends as an organisation.

An Update from Toby Jones

The countdown has begun for next year's 10th Anniversary. The Newport Ship Project is planning a series of events to commemorate the discovery and excavation of the medieval ship. We are hoping to gather together everyone who has been involved in the project in order to share memories and have a celebration in the summer of 2012.

If you came to see the ship on one of the recent open days, you will have noticed the bright new display boards greeting the many visitors to the ship centre. These boards were generously funded by the Friends of the Ship, and have been a focal point for members of the public wanting to find out more about the ongoing archaeology and conservation research. The Friends of the Ship and project staff are also working together on a revised edition of the popular guidebook, which has nearly sold out of the first print run of 1500 copies.

The Newport Ship Project has received a £15,000 grant from the Museums, Libraries and Archives PRISM Fund to help with the freeze drying of the ship timbers! The project also received a £2500 grant from the Federation of Museums & Art Galleries of Wales. Other grant applications have been submitted, and we are waiting with anticipation!

Conservation of the ship timbers and associated artefacts is continuing to gather pace. We have appointed Marie Jordan as our new conservator, and she has been busy cleaning and conserving

small finds including parts of the ship pump, leather shoes, and the patten. We have entered into a contract with York Archaeological Trust to freeze-dry the ship timbers, and will shortly be taking delivery of a large freeze dryer. We hope to have the first batch of dried timbers completed early next year.

We have continued to use the laser scanner to document artefacts like the pump and rigging, and are preparing to laser scan the inboard and outboard faces of the finished model. The 3D digital data set of the model, which is a major outcome of the ShipShape Project, will be used as a starting point for determining the original hull form of the ship. This exercise will run in parallel with an effort to physically model the missing parts of the scaled hull using plastic battens. The results of the ShipShape project will be presented at the upcoming IKUWA conference in Croatia.

We have taken delivery of the first batch of timbers from the Swash Channel wreck, which dates to the early 17th century and was discovered near Poole Harbour in Dorset. The Swash Channel wreck team are renting some of our spare tanks and hoping to use the wash tables and recording equipment in the near future to clean and record their ship timbers. The Swash Channel wreck is even larger than the Newport Ship, with the rudder standing eight metres tall!

Toby Jones – Curator, Newport Ship

example is not as clear as that of the Mary Rose, it is still possible to make out the gridline arrangement which is characteristic of this type of game (fig. 3).

The 'daldøs' group is a type of 'running-fight' board game, which combines a race to the finish (like backgammon) whilst also capturing your opponents pieces (like chess). In the long hours spent on board a ship during a long voyage this type of game would have provided light relief for the ships crew, as well as maybe sparking a few arguments!

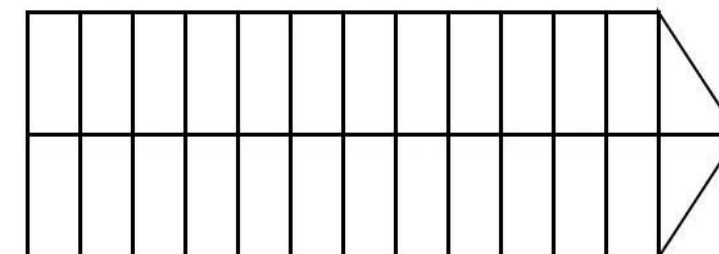


FIG. 3

Conservation

Currently, the PEG treatment phase of the ship is still going strong. We've been busy increasing the concentrations every few weeks, to ensure that the high molecular-weight PEG fully and safely penetrates the wood in order to bulk it out and give it strength for the freeze-drying that is to come.

In case you are new to the newsletter (or the finer points of waterlogged wood conservation have slipped your mind), I'll offer a bit of a review as to why we're keeping the gorgeous timbers hidden under tarps for the time being as well as an explanation of what PEG really is.

PEG ((poly)ethylene glycol) is a polymer that, among other attributes, acts as a water-soluble wax. It has many other uses; check the ingredients listed on your hand lotion or conditioner and you may well find some variety of PEG there.

The number that often follows 'PEG' is the average number of PEG monomers in each polymer. This means that for PEG 200, the average molecule is made of 200 monomers – identical building blocks that join together to make the molecule. More simply, the larger the number is, then the larger the PEG molecule is. We're currently using a mixture of mostly PEG 3350 with a small amount of PEG 200 included.

Wood needs to be treated with PEG before freeze-drying to ensure the wood survives the drying process. Without the PEG replacing the water in the wood, freeze-drying would cause the timbers to collapse, twist and otherwise change size and shape, while cracking and splitting. There are many other options for

Many thanks to Jon Hather and Peter Michaelsen for their contributions to this article.

Morwenna Perrott

strengthening the wood, such as using sucrose, a mixture of acetone and rosin, or impregnating the wood with resin which is then cured to make it hard and long-lasting.

While every conservation method has drawbacks that must be carefully considered, PEG is the best treatment choice for the Newport Medieval Ship. It also has the advantage of being very widely used, so that there are a lot of other treatment programs, both finished and ongoing, that we can learn from as we conserve the ship.

As the timbers are submerged, the PEG seeps in and slowly replaces the water that has helped the wood maintain its structure over all this time. Very small PEG molecules make their way into the walls of the wood cells, adding their strength to the inorganic lignin already there. The larger PEG molecules can't make their way into the cell walls, but fill in the hollow centre of the cells, where the organic cellulose has decayed away. The wood is strengthened on two fronts, and once the wood is fully impregnated, the remaining extra water (often called unbound water, because it's not strongly bonded to the wood) can be safely removed.

Although PEG treatment and freeze-drying takes months for the large timbers, smaller objects can be treated much more quickly. Although won't happen overnight, we should soon have some smaller objects that have completed their PEG treatment and freeze-drying. The end (for some things) is in sight!

Marie Jordan

Gaming on board the Newport Ship

In the third of our series documenting different aspects of the ship's small finds assemblage, we are looking at evidence of gaming on the Newport ship. The principle indications that we have of the ship's crew taking part in games on board are a gaming piece, and part of a cask lid (or possible oven scraper), with some grid lines etched into it.

The gaming piece was found in a sealed context within the ship that contained most of the large structural timbers. This suggests it did belong to someone on the ship. As shown in the image (fig. 1), the piece is decorated with lathe-turned concentric mouldings, 'rays' around the edge and a flower motif in the centre. This is a very similar design to modern gaming counters and would have been used to play 'Merels', also known as Nine Men's Morris, and an early version of Backgammon called Tables.

In conjunction with this, a flat, semicircular piece of wood etched with gridlines (fig. 2) reveals an intriguing insight into how the crew might have spent their leisure time. It too was found within the Newport Ship and gaming history specialist Peter Michaelsen has identified it as an obsolete type of game known as 'proto-daldøs'.

To put this in context, the game 'daldøs' emerged in Scandinavia in the 18th century. However before this, the game had evolved from its origins in the Eastern Mediterranean and was found to have existed in Britain from as early as the 13th century. A codex from Cerne Abbey in Dorset contains the first known image of a proto-daldøs board from this period. Subsequent to this the Mary Rose was found to have an example of a proto-daldøs board on a cask lid. Whilst our



FIG. 2

We Want Your Memories

It is hard to believe that next year will be the ten year anniversary of the discovery of the Medieval Ship. The project has been on an amazing journey, the Friends of the Newport Ship have been there every step of the way and we're asking for your help again. We want you to share your memories with us. Were you involved in the campaign to save the ship? Did you stand on the picket line? How did you feel about the discovery? Did you see the ship in the ground? We would love to talk to you or see any memorabilia you may have, especially photographs! So please get in touch either by calling the ship centre on 01633 215707 or by emailing emma.routley@newport.gov.uk



Charles Ferris - Our Medieval moneyer

"I have found it more interactive for younger children this time than previous visits I have been on"
"Interesting for all the family – staff were very knowledgeable and keen to involve the younger children"

Open Days 2011

The team and I have been overwhelmed by the success of the open days this year. It has been great to see so many familiar faces and people are still pouring through the doors as first time visitors. We wanted to change the format of the open days to encourage more repeat visits and put the medieval ship in context. The open days have been themed; music, medicine and food and drink, to allow visitors to find out about medieval life. They have danced to medieval music, thrown tomatoes at pirates in the stocks, learnt about bloodletting and amputation and embarked on rat hunts around the warehouse. Here are just a few

comments from recent visitors:
"An excellent event"
"It was fascinating today and I have learnt plenty for my school medieval project"

Visitors have also had the opportunity to see timbers from the Swash Channel Wreck, which has been featured on the BBC documentary Britain's Secret Seas. The vessel is a high status early 17th century armed merchant ship that was discovered near Poole Harbour. Thanks to Newport Bus we have made it even easier for visitors to come and see us. On open days the no.35 Duffryn service has been extended to stop, on request, at the ship centre.



Ready for a tour



Deputy Mayor John Guy with pirate

So if you haven't been down to see us recently come along to the final open day of the year on Saturday 3rd December, Medieval Christmas and the Newport Ship 11am – 4pm. Wrap up warm and join us for a medieval celebration.

The Minstrels of the Forest will entertain us with traditional carols, make your own pomander and discover more about the Newport Medieval Ship.

Remember you can always follow us on Twitter (@NewportShip) and on Facebook (<http://tinyurl.com/newportshipfacebook>) to see photographs from the open days and to keep in touch with the team.

Emma Routley
Community Engagement Officer

passers-by. I'm not sure how painful it would be to be in the way of a Black or Warden Pear, a particularly hard fruit, inedible when raw, but often referred to in early recipes. This fruit was first recorded at Warden Abbey, Bedfordshire in the 13th century, possibly introduced by the Romans and spread by the Normans. The Worcestershire Black Pear is thought to be a descendent of the original Warden Pear. This variety is now rare and very localised.

The idea of cooking pears in red wine is far from new – in about 1390 the chefs of Richard 11 included Peeres in confyt in their collection of recipes known as The Forme of Cury. Recipes appeared regularly throughout the 15th century and 600 years later there are plenty of versions available but on line rather than on parchment: it's still being worked by Delia and Jamie etc.

Trish Hayward

Wardens are often likened to quinces – so they may be, in that quinces are very hard and can't be eaten raw either. However, I tend to use hard ie unripe pears eg Comice, and cook them for quite a time – being able to cook hard pears overnight in the bottom oven was one of the few positive features of my vintage, inherited, Rayburn, thankfully now gone! A slow-cooker is suggested in one modern version.




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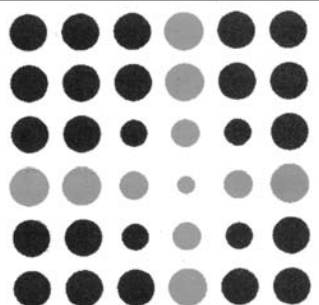

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Members of Ship Team to Travel to IKUWA Conference

With the financial support of the Friends of the Newport Ship, two members of the Ship team, Toby Jones and I, Erica McCarthy and the Project Consultant Nigel Nayling, will attend the fourth international congress for underwater archaeology conference (IKUWA 4) in Zadar, Croatia.

IKUWA's theme this year is "Managing the underwater cultural heritage" and is being held from September 29th - October 2nd 2011. The Newport Ship team has successfully submitted a paper about the Newport Ship Project, and have been invited to speak about the recent progress. The IKUWA conference is one of the largest gatherings of maritime archaeologists in Europe, with delegates coming from around the world. In addition to archaeologists, there will be government and United Nations (UNESCO) officials present, and it could prove a useful opportunity to publicise the project to a broader European and even global audience.

The proceedings of the conference will be outlined in the next Newsletter, so watch this space!

Erica McCarthy
Project Officer.

WARDEN PEARS

City streets around England would once have rung to cries of the bakers, butchers, pie makers and baked pear vendors. This rhyme, which uses the pear's alternative name of warden pear, is recorded as the shout of the baked pear vendor: Smoking hot, piping hot Who knows what I've got In my pot? Hot baked wardens All hot! All hot! All hot! Black pears were baked because there was no way they could be eaten raw.

There is an especially fine black pear tree growing in Suckley and its owner, Garston Phillips, kindly gave me some to try. They certainly live up to their alternative name of the iron pear! Picked in October the big bulbous fruit are a dark mahogany colour, with a rough, rock hard interior, which is almost inedible before cooking but delicious afterwards. Cooked in red wine or perry, with brown sugar, a few cloves or some cinnamon they make a lovely dessert (even if they do take 2-3 hours to cook)! This slow stewing method was popular for centuries the pears were often placed in a baker's oven overnight.

The Pear has a long association with Worcestershire, which historically was described as 'the county of pears'. At the battle of Agincourt in 1415, the bowmen of Worcestershire rallied under a banner depicting a pear tree laden with fruit. Black pears were thought to have been transported with the troops because of their long lasting properties and considering how hard they are they could also have proved a useful extra weapon! In his epic poem about the battle of Agincourt, the poet Drayton refers to the badge of Worcester as: 'Wor'ster a pear tree laden with its fruit'.

The black pear variety, possibly introduced by the Romans and extended throughout the country by the Normans, was first recorded at Warden Abbey, Bedfordshire, in the 13th century and is also called the warden pear.

A seasonal (and easy) dessert, popular from the 13th century At this time of year the garden becomes a potentially dangerous place as fruit falls off the trees on to the heads of hapless

TRIAL NEW TECHNOLOGY

Recently, thanks to funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), the Newport Medieval Ship team has been working on an exciting new project in collaboration with Birmingham University and Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery. This project is focused on using our 3D data to create a digital reconstruction of the Newport Medieval Ship, which is and subsequently used to test a cutting edge device known as a '3D Touch Table'.

On the 15th of August three members of the Friends of the Newport Ship, Trish Hayward, Jeff and Rhys Brooks and two members of the ship team Morwenna Perrott and myself, Erica McCarthy, travelled to Birmingham University to experience the 3d Touch Table for themselves and take part in the testing of the of the table's interface. The human-computer interaction staff of the Visual and Spatial Technology Centre in Birmingham University also asked us to take part in two other trials. We tested a 2d Touch Table, which was being used by Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery as part of the Suburban Birmingham Exhibition and in the final test we were asked to experiment with an annotation system on a form of eBook.



After each trial a one to one interview took place, and a short questionnaire was filled out, where our reaction to the technology was gauged and our opinions could be voiced. We all thoroughly enjoyed the experience, especially seeing the early stage, 3 dimensional digital reconstruction of the Newport Medieval Ship. This was perhaps the highlight of the day! While wearing 3d glasses, we were first individually invited to familiarise ourselves with the functioning of the 3d Touch Table. Once we grasped the methods of rotating, panning, and zooming in and out we were then asked to locate a number of objects that were hidden within the digital ship. Through the use of a few simple hand gestures, it was possible to explore the ship from its upper deck down to the bilges, from bow to stern and port to starboard, a truly exhilarating experience!

Erica McCarthy
Project Officer.

ABOUT MARIE

Hello, I'm Marie Jordan and I'm the new Conservator at the Newport Ship Project, replacing Sophie Adamson. I recently graduated from Cardiff University with a BSc (Hons) in Conservation of Objects in Museums and Archaeology, and at the time of writing, I've been with the Newport Ship Project for almost a (very full!) month. I moved to Wales from the United States three years ago. I previously worked as a systems analyst for several years, following getting a BA in Anthropology.

In addition to volunteering with the Newport Ship in my first year at University, I've done internships at the Mary Rose Trust and the National Museum Wales Amgueddfa Cymru Collections Centre in Nantgarw. Before moving to Wales, I sailed and helped maintain the 1902 Portuguese barkentine Gazela Primiero as a volunteer with the Philadelphia Ship Preservation Guild.



Naming the Newport Ship

Since its discovery various attempts have been made to discover the origins of the Newport Ship and to find out what it was called.

This maybe an impossible task, because there were literally thousands of ships on the seas in the middle of the 15th century and we have limited information that could link our vessel to any particular named ship.

Investigation and research is still going on but here is just some of the evidence. We do know from tree ring dating of the wooden shores (props) found beneath the ship that she was beached in a tidal inlet at Newport in or after AD 1467/8. We also know from the date of a coin found embedded in the keel that it must have been built in or after AD 1447. We know the ship was clinker built, and was large for the time, capable of carrying a cargo of maybe 200 tons or more.

It also appears that the ship was not of local build, but was probably constructed on the Atlantic coast of southern France, Spain or northern Portugal. It has been suggested that she is a Basque ship, and also that she might have been built in the town of Bayonne, but so far this has not been proven.

We have many clues to her history. She appears to have been a trading vessel, and among other things barrel staves and also Portuguese coins and pottery have been found within the ship's hull. There are also a few individual merchant marks (i.e. trade-marks or logos) found within or underneath the hull. One of these appears to be the mark of a 15th century Bristol merchant called Robert Baron.

In the 15th century merchant ships had to be able to defend themselves and doubled up as warships when necessary. Again there are examples of stone shot for cannons, an archer's brace (i.e. wrist strap) and possibly part of a high status helmet found within the hull.

The ship had been repaired, probably in Britain soon after AD. 1459. When found the ship had a major crack running through the mast step (a base to secure the main mast). Also unfinished ship timber, possibly for a major refit, dating to

AD 1465, was found inside the ship. In addition the ship had been partially dismantled, even having a crude door cut in the starboard side.

Finally there is an account of a ship being 'built' (probably repaired) at Newport in AD 1469, and payments being authorised by Richard Neville, earl of Warwick. The Warwick letter is discussed in the guide book to the ship and in an article in S.O.S. No.13. What does seem clear is that there were strong connections between shipping at Newport and the port of Bristol, and that our ship came to Newport at a crucial time in the Wars of the Roses, probably at a time when William Herbert, earl of Pembroke had been killed and had lost control of Newport to Richard Neville.

Given this information it is possible to suggest a number of vessels that our ship might have been, but all suggestions have problems, including lack of definitive proof.

One suggestion is that it could be a ship called the Gabriell. This was a large ship owned by William Herbert that was wrecked off the coast of Ireland. In AD 1465 a grant was made by Edward IV to William Herbert "of all the gear, fittings wines and other merchandise on a great ship of his called Gabriell, which he had sent at great expense to foreign parts and which on its return from thence to England laden with divers wines and merchandise was wrecked on the coast of Ireland, through which the said gear, fittings, wines and merchandise were cast ashore and belong to the king as wreck of the sea. [Source: Calendar of Patent Rolls March 23rd. 5 Edward IV]

Herbert had control of Newport until the Battle of Edgecote on 6th July 1469, when he was killed. Therefore the Gabriell could have been to Newport, but there is no other evidence for this and the grant clearly states the ship was wrecked off the coast of Ireland, so it seems very unlikely she was the Newport Ship.

Another suggestion is that the Newport Ship could be the Raphael. In AD 1468 the Raphael belonged to a Bristol merchant called John May. In August of that year she was taking various goods from Danzig in Prussia to Bristol. However

a violent storm compelled her to wait in Bede Bay in the Bristol Channel, and despite dropping anchors and cutting away the mast the ship was driven ashore and goods and gear from the ship were looted, even though she was not a wreck. [Source: Calendar of Patent Rolls March 11th. 9 Edward IV]

The mast of the Newport Ship is missing but the mast step and some of the hull timbers were split - so this sounds like storm damage. Also the Raphael was a Bristol ship, and the date matches with timbers beneath the Newport Ship. Unfortunately there is another reference to the ship as a 'carvel', not clinker built. If this reference is correct then it cannot be the Newport Ship.

A third suggestion is that she could be a ship called the Marie of Bayonne. In AD 1458 the ship was granted safe conduct to trade by Richard Neville, earl of Warwick. The Marie of Bayonne was described as being able to carry 250 tons and her master was called Stephen de Maison Nau. There were also four merchants and four score mariners on board.

There are various other references to a ship of this name, and in AD 1460 a commission was led by William Caynges, mayor of Bristol, into a complaint by Stephen de Maison Nau, master of the Marie of Bayonne that trusting the king's letters patent of safe conduct and the security promised by ... Richard earl of Warwick, that John Clinton and many others took the ship and the Marie of La Rochelle under promise of re-delivery to bring ... Richard duke of York to England; but although they faithfully served the duke with their ships they cannot recover the ships. The ships were also attacked by John Clinton and cannons fired at them, killing one of the crew.

The commission found that the ships had in fact been forcibly seized by John Clinton and others with the merchandise, gear and equipment then on board for their defence, and took them to foreign parts contrary to the letters of safe conduct. However it goes on to state that a ship called la Marie of Bayonne is still in the port of Bristol. [Source Calendar of Inquisitions Miscellaneous 24th December 39 Henry VI]

This was during the Wars of the Roses and John Clinton, the sixth earl of Clinton, was a prominent Yorkist, together with Richard Neville. In AD 1460

Clinton also seized a number of other ships, to form a fleet to secure the Severn for the return of Richard duke of York from Ireland. Two years later he was with the king's fleet attacking the French. It is unlikely the Marie of Bayonne was ever returned to its rightful owner.

However this is no proof that the Newport Ship was the Marie of Bayonne but she is from the area from where the Newport Ship is thought to have come, she is of the right size and date, and she has a Bristol connection, the date she was seized matches the date of repairs made in Britain in about 1460, and also there are strong links with Richard Neville, earl of Warwick. It is tempting to think that in AD 1469 that Neville had the damaged ship towed from Bristol for unsuccessful repairs at Newport. This was at a time when he was asserting his power over the king and would have needed all the ships he could get.

There are other possibilities which maybe could be given in a future newsletter.

Bob Trett

