



Friends of the Newport Ship

Newsletter

June 2017

Registered Charity No.1105449

Unit 20, Estuary Road, Queensway Meadows Industrial Estate, Newport, NP19 4SP www.newportship.org

Chairman's Introduction

Imagine in years to come, a full scale replica of our marvellous Ship sailing up the River Usk..... It could actually happen! I hit the Welsh News (in between the local election coverage) in an interview where I suggested that within the next 10 years, our friends at Albaola could have completed their current project (replicating the San Juan 1563) and have taken on and completed a full scale, fully functioning and magnificent replica of our own mighty Ship.



Unless Newport City Council actually comes up with a consolidated Heritage Development Plan for Newport, we could be waiting years for funding for the building works necessary to modify the existing Museum & Art Gallery either to strip out the third floor, or to add a fourth floor to house our re-assembly.

After much work to get prints of the new painting by David Jordan – ensuring that we got the right colour of the original, we have in stock in the Cabin the A3 and postcard sized prints. In expression of our thanks to David, we 'promoted' him to Honorary Captain.

The Expert Panel meeting 21 April brought together those who have so far been involved with our project on a professional basis.

To date this has been very much focused on the conservation of the Newport Ship, but now this will change to being concerned with the re-assembly and display. Our timbers should have been fully conserved by the end of 2018 ready for putting back together. All we need is for Newport City Council to formally announce the future location and bid for funding for the project.

Donations: following several appeals to the membership, we have received a generous donation of £500 from an existing member towards the Library project, allowing Toby to purchase books that will fill 'gaps' in our knowledge and assist particularly with the reconstruction of our mighty Ship.

One of our visiting groups surprised us with a cheque for £240 following their visit to the Ship Centre, and we are continuing to gain a regular income stream from our YouTube presence.

We still need significant funds for updating the displays at the Ship Centre and hopefully putting new display shelves in the conservation stores to allow visitors sight of some of the small finds that are currently hidden away in boxes in the store.



Chairman Phil @ Kings Lynn
© Rex Makemson

Obituary: Sheila Dyke



It is with sadness that we report the passing of Sheila Dyke, who, along with her late husband John were ardent supporters of our project from the very beginning in 2002.

As a campaigner in the original Save Our Ship movement and founder member of the Friends of Newport Ship, Sheila (and John) worked to set up the retail sales operation which today continues to raise funds for the project.

Sheila and John owned and ran a small engineering company, giving them business knowledge and insight which was invaluable, especially in the early days of the Friends.

Sheila could always be seen at the big Open Days at Maesglas, welcoming visitors to the sales tables and encouraging them to buy from the selection on offer.

We will miss her humour, directness and warmth.

Jean Gray

From our Curator

Dear FONS Members,

Over the last several months we have been inspecting and repackaging the hundreds of small artefacts found during the ship excavation. While they all have been expertly conserved, it is necessary to periodically inspect them and ensure that they are stable. Students and faculty from Cardiff University and the University of Wales Trinity Saint David spent around 200 hours reviewing and repackaging the finds. This work was supported by the FoNS, who provided refreshments for the students.

The Swansea University Cradle Feasibility Project has officially started. A post-graduate student from Germany, Elena Stein, has been selected for the fellowship. She is based in Swansea and will work closely with project staff to create a feasibility study of the proposed ship cradle design. The project is being supervised by Professor Wulf Dettmer. I will try and arrange for the researcher to do a presentation of the work at the end of the project in late summer. We are currently investigating the suitability of constructing a fibre-reinforced polymer cradle to support the ship.

In a related matter, more planks will shortly be added to our trial reassembly model of the amidships area of the hull. This work can be viewed in the new timber store at the ship centre. We are also preparing for the imminent arrival of more conserved timbers later in the summer. With FONS support we have

built bespoke pallets for the timbers to rest on in the new store.

Thank you to FONS volunteers for help on the Pallet Building Day in late April. We used up all the timber and made 18 new pallets that will fit the racking in the new store, holding the planks that will be returned in September from York.

Thanks for your ongoing support!

Dr Toby Jones



Obituary: Owain TP Roberts



The Friends have received the sad news of the passing of Owain Roberts. Owain was an internationally acknowledged maritime authority and a valued supporter of the original campaign to see our Ship preserved.

His effective lobbying of the council helped to impress upon them the true value of the find. Owain wrote the first article in the IJNA which described the initial archaeology on the site (reproduced in our SOS5 newsletter). He went on to source contemporary illustrations of carrack and provided the first images of how the Ship may have appeared with three masts.

Recognising that the Ship representing a fusion between the northern ocean and Mediterranean schools of shipbuilding he predicted the Ship was of Biscayan origin. His illustration of the Ship provided FoNS



with our society logo. For many years, Owain sat on the Expert Panel to oversee the conservation progress. He appeared frequently on TV giving his authoritative opinion on maritime history and can be seen on HTV's "Caught in a Storm" and BBC's Timewatch program shown regularly at the Ship Centre. His contributions also covered the Barlands boat (with Sean McGrail)(Mariner's Mirror 2013) and Llyn Padarn slate boat (Maritime Wales 1979). He was a true friend of the Ship, a passionate Welshman and an ardent supporter of the Welsh language.

Charles Ferris

The Newport Ship's 15th Anniversary Concert: Riverfront Theatre, Saturday 19th August

Tickets are **now on sale** from the Riverfront at a cost of £20 per person, to include a glass of wine before the concert. Either call their box office on 01633 656757, or go online www.newportlive.co.uk

Charles Ferris, Patron

Events: Out and About

The events season is now in full swing and Rob Kenny (Secretary & Events Coordinator) and Phil Cox (Chairman) spent a wonderful weekend in Kings Lynn where their Hanse Festival took place. As well as taking our travelling exhibition and the coin strike, we gained a few new memberships and could now start a Norfolk Branch of FoNS! Rob gave a very well received talk to a packed meeting of the local history society which then brought in lots more visitors to our stand. It was an excellent event which was well blessed by good weather and a fascinating variety of visitors.



We will be taking our exhibition out to other events including: **Tintern Fete** (24 June), **Monmouth Show** (1 July) **Tewkesbury Medieval Festival & Battle Re-enactment** (8-9 July), **Spetchley Park Festival** (12-13 August) and **Ammanford Medieval Festival** (16-17 September). We need more helpers to make sure that we can tell our stories and inspire visitors to our stand to come on down to the Ship Centre.

If you can spare some time then please contact Rob at

events@newportship.org or on 07718 751391

Visits to National Museum of Wales, Nantgarw

In previous newsletters I informed Friends that I had organised four visits to Nantgarw to see the many interesting items in the National Museum's storage facility. Unfortunately, to date, little interest in these visits has been shown by Friends. The first in April attracted only seven participants of which four were committee members. Nevertheless, we all very much enjoyed our visit. I have decided to cancel the next visit scheduled for 22 June because only two people had asked to be included. There are two further visits scheduled for September and November and unless there is a sudden rush of interested parties, I will probably cancel one of these and ask those few who have expressed interest to combine into one visit. Anyone who wishes to visit Nantgarw and has not already contacted me, please do so as soon as possible.

Robert Kenny, Events Coordinator

Forthcoming Ship Centre Events

21 June: Music @ the Ship – in collaboration with the Lyceum Folk Club and Newport Folk Club we present an evening of acoustic and folk music. Come along and join in. £5 entry on the door. Bar opens at 7.00pm

22 July: Pirates Day @ the Ship – South Wales Pirates will cause havoc around the Ship Centre and the yard and Capt'n Charlie will be striking coins.

22 July: Evening Talk – Dr Evan Jones tells the tales of "Smugglers of the Severn Sea"

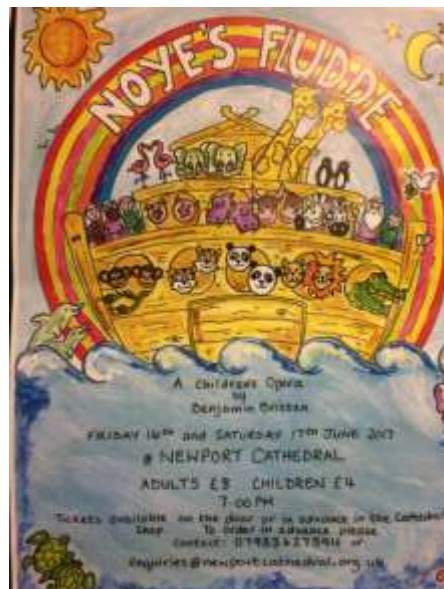
Noye's Fludde at St Woolos' Cathedral Friday 16th & Saturday 17th June 2017

Newport Cathedral is planning a large-scale community music event later this year: performances of a children's opera, "Noye's Fludde" (Noah's Flood), which recounts the Biblical story of Noah, the flood and the ark.

This fantastic project will bring children from diverse backgrounds and from all over Newport together to perform in the Cathedral. Over 100 children will be participating in the performances: singing, dancing, acting and playing instruments. More children are involved producing the animal costumes as part of the Gaer Primary School's Family Learning Scheme and 200 children from the Gaer Primary School and St Woolos Primary School will be attending the dress rehearsal.

We hope that this project will inspire all those involved and broaden the horizons both of the children and their families, sowing the seeds of a life-long appreciation of music.

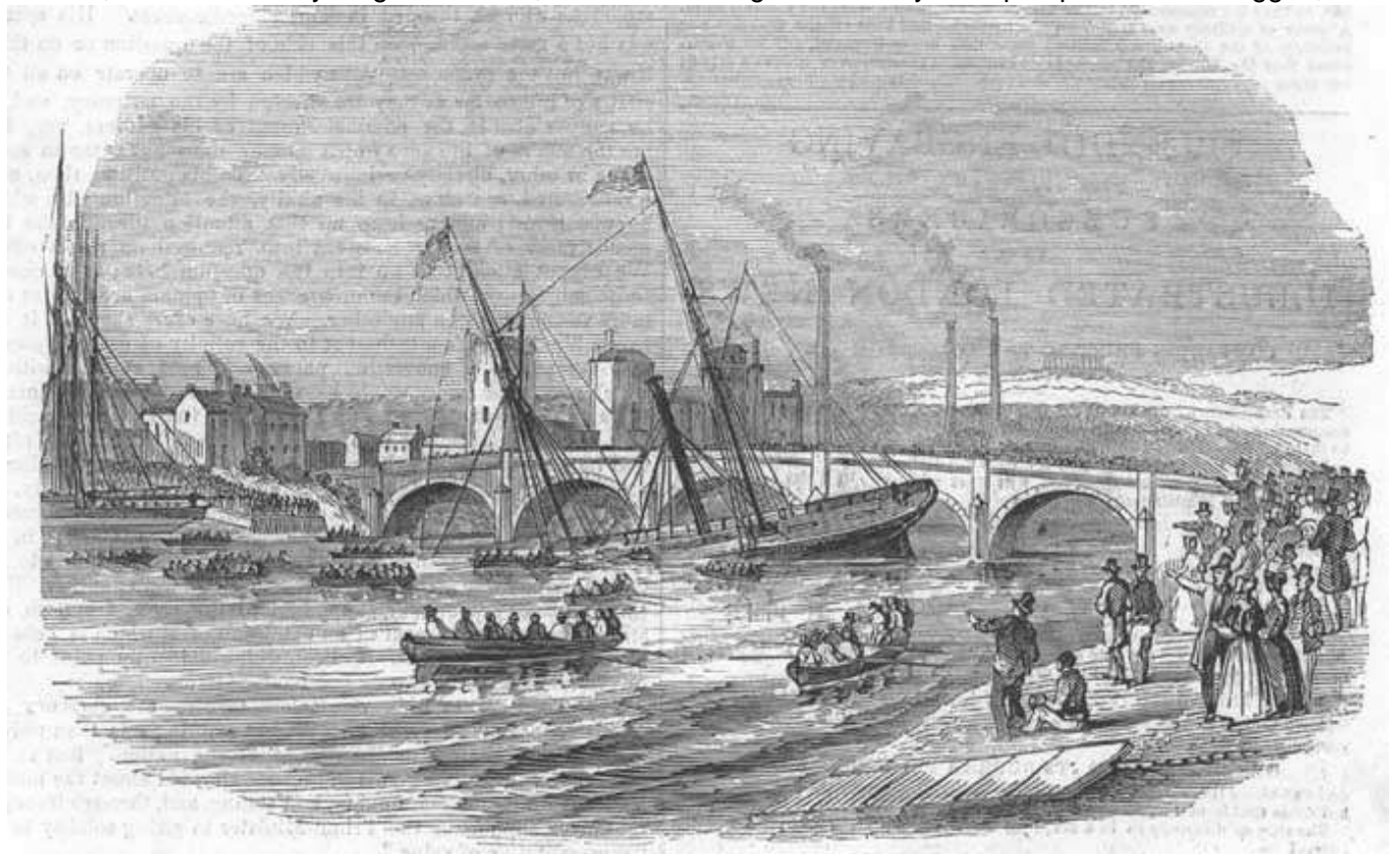
The performances will be ticketed events and any money raised will be used to start a fund to finance future community music events. We hope that this will be the first of many such projects, allowing the Cathedral to continue making a difference in children's lives.



WRECK OF THE "SEVERN" SCREW-STEAMER, NEWPORT-BRIDGE

Source: *The Illustrated London News*, May, 1844, and reproduced with permission of NewportPast.com

Within these few weeks two new iron steamers, the Severn and Avon, fitted with the Archimedean screw and high-pressure engines, have been started in opposition to the old line of steam-packets between Bristol and Newport, South Wales. On Saturday evening last, about a quarter to six o'clock, when about to start, the Severn was lying at her berth, near the Newport bridge, with her bow towards the bridge, her stern being down the river, or in the direction of Bristol. At this time the tide was running up the Newport River very strongly, at about seven knots an hour; and of course near to the bridge the current produced by the tide shooting through the arches of the bridge was much stronger. The signal for starting having been given, the captain commenced swinging the vessel round, and cast off the stern-chain, depending upon the bow-rope and the power of the engine, for bringing her round with her head to the tide, and thus getting her under weigh. At this moment, when the order was given to back her, it was found that the screw would not revolve; the vessel immediately swung round, and, carried with the run of the tide, struck with her bow the wedgelike buttress of the bridge, and, recoiling, almost instantly struck with her side against another buttress with such force that everyone on the bridge fully expected to see her turn clean over. At this moment the scene was truly distressing - the spectators on shore, as well as their friends on board, screaming dreadfully. Boats were instantly put in requisition, and the passengers, upwards of fifty in number, were fortunately all got on shore; but not without great difficulty. The pumps were then rigged, and



exertions made to save the steamer, other persons being employed in the meantime in removing the luggage, &c, which was safely effected. In about an hour and a half, however, she was seen to go down, the captain and crew having only just jumped into some boats, previously to her sinking; indeed, they stayed by her so long that their boats were swamped; but the crew were fortunately picked up and rescued, though not until some of them had been drawn under the bridge, and to some distance above it.

The cause of the catastrophe is thus explained in the Times report, the information having been received from a gentleman connected with her engineering department, and who was on board at the time of the accident. He says that on the arrival of the Severn at Newport, on Saturday, it was intended to put a new screw into her; when the captain stated it to be so late upon tide, that if it were done, he should not have time to swing her round in the slack tide. The intention was then abandoned, and shortly after, while the cargo was being landed, the vessel grounded, upon which the captain, finding that she could not be swung until the next tide, the screw she was then working with was removed, and a new one put in; and this gentleman says that almost immediately up to the time of the water covering the screw all was free and everything right, for he himself turned round the screw by hand. The steam was then got up, and no danger was apprehended. Upon the orders being given on Saturday evening, the screw was put in motion, but before it had made a single revolution it stopped, and the vessel drifted up the river. She then struck

forward, but only bent the iron; the after-strain was, however, so great, that it shortly became a rent, and her fore compartment instantly filled with water (the vessel being built in watertight compartments). Every exertion was made, until the water rushing over her decks, she filled and sank, rolling heavily over. Still no cause could be assigned for the non-action of the screw; but, on the tide leaving her, a chain was discovered firmly twisted round the screw, which had thus caused her destruction. How the chain came there is a complete mystery, as all her mooring chains have since been examined, and are safe, and the captain and crew say that they had no such chain on deck. The vessel subsequently rolled over with every tide, and had a rent in her side from the deck to her keel, large enough for men to walk in and out.

The accompanying sketch is taken from the Old Company's wharf, and includes the Bridge Inn, the Bridge, and Castle - the latter now used as a brewery; the large building in course of erection upon the hill is the new Barracks.

At low water, as the wreck lay dry, the owners were enabled to examine her damages. It was then discovered that she had a transverse fissure in her larboard bends, the iron plates of which were rent asunder, from two to three feet wide, and from six to seven feet long, caused by her coming in contact with the pier, and the constant friction produced by the action of the tide upon the vessel. During the whole of Saturday night, men were engaged in repairing the breach and lightening the vessel, but the tide returning on Sunday morning, carried the vessel back against the bridge, sweeping away a large portion of her bulwarks; for a few moments she righted, but such was the force of the tide, that she fell over on her larboard side, and her masts, coming in contact with the bridge, they snapped asunder, and, with her standing rigging, were carried away with the tide. During the whole of Sunday, the workmen were engaged in covering the breach with boards, and caulking every joint, stopping all the ports, scuppers, hatchways, and making every effort to get out and keep out the water on the return of the tide; a number of empty barrels were put into the hold, with a view to buoy her up; strong warps and chains were attached, and a steam-tug procured, so that on the flood-tide they might be enabled to bring her head to the stream; but, notwithstanding every exertion made, the assistants of the tug-boat and fifteen stout brewery horses, such was the force of the tide, that it was found impossible to move her. On the ebb of the tide, the vessel was carried down the river forty or fifty yards, upon a hard gravelly bottom, considerably abrading her keel and bottom plates; and on the flow she was carried back to her old position against the bridge, where she now remains, on her beam-ends, a complete wreck. The vessel, it is believed, belongs to Messrs. Stother, Slaughter, and Co., of Bristol, and was considered to be one of the finest boats leaving that port.

Membership Renewals

In last December's newsletter, following my election as Secretary at the AGM, I advised members that I wanted to deal with several anomalies regarding payment of membership subscriptions. One of these is the custom of renewal subscriptions being paid on or about the anniversary of when a person became a Friend. This results in payments being received throughout the year. The FoNS Constitution states that membership subscriptions are renewable annually on 24th August and I would appreciate all members starting to adopt this practice this year. I am aware that some members have made payments during the past few months and I would respectfully request that they regard these as a donation and make a further payment on 24th August. However, if a member does not agree with this approach, please contact me and we can arrange a pro-rata payment for this August. I trust that all members will support my proposals in order to improve the procedure for renewal of membership fees and to be in accordance with the Constitution.

Many members already pay their annual subscription by standing order which is much appreciated. However, there are a couple of problems which arise here also. Firstly, I would greatly appreciate members setting up standing orders to make payments direct to FoNS' bank account with HSBC. Currently a large number of standing orders are via PayPal and I understand that PayPal retains a proportion of the payment as a commission/fee. Payments direct to our HSBC account do not suffer such reduction. A standing order form is included with this newsletter for your convenience.

Secondly, quite a large number of members have not amended their standing orders to reflect increases in annual subscription rates which took effect some years ago (before my time as Secretary). Current Membership rates are: Adult £10, Couple £15, Student (still in full-time education) £5, Overseas rates \$30, Eu25 and these rates will apply in 2017. Membership subscription rates will not be reviewed until the AGM in September 2017.

Finally, we would encourage as many members as possible to give us their email addresses to allow us to send communications electronically rather than by post which in turn means that more of your subscription goes to supporting the project.

Robert Kenny, Secretary

Fundraising: Newport Uskmouth Rotary Draw

Once again, the Friends of Newport Ship have had an excellent result from this fundraising effort. We sold almost all of the 2,000 tickets that we were allocated, bringing in £1,965 to our coffers. In terms of prizes, we had 3 prize winners amongst our buyers. Our thanks go out to all those who bought tickets in the hope of winning the star prizes of cash, and there is special thank you to all those who sold tickets on our behalf.

Fundraising: Sponsored Run

Our chairman is delighted to announce that his fiancée, Naura is entered into the Cardiff half-marathon taking place on 1st October 2017, and we will be seeking sponsorship for her efforts in favour of the Friends of Newport Ship.

If anybody wants to join her on the run, I believe that there are still places available, but we will be campaigning for support for her along with your contributions!

Traditional Recipe: Baccalau (Mediterranean Cod)

Our Basque friends tell us that this traditional Iberian dish was inspired by the beautiful fish caught by the Basque and Irish fishermen on the Newfoundland Banks from a time way before Columbus and Cabot ventured across the Atlantic. The Basques had always caught whales in the Bay of Biscay, and when they had decimated the stock there, followed their migration path to Newfoundland where they discovered a plentiful supply of Cod. This fish was different to Icelandic Cod which was known as 'stokfish'. The new supply was preserved on the Newfoundland coast with salt brought across from southern Europe. This salt was harvested using traditional salt pans, allowing sea water to evaporate to leave the glistening white crystals which were packed into barrels for transport on outbound fishing vessels.

Ingredients: (serves 2)

- 500g cod
- 2 medium sized potatoes
- 1 onion
- 2 tomatoes
- Half a pepper
- 1 head of garlic
- About 8 black olives
- And whatever other vegetables you fancy



Use best quality cod. If it is salted, rinse and then soak in freshwater for an hour or so, changing the water 2 or 3 times. Slice your vegetables – potatoes (about 1cm thick), chop the garlic and anything else you have in the vegetable drawer (broccoli or whatever)

Method:

Put the cod into a shallow pan, bring to the boil and simmer for about 10 minutes, then lift out and put to one side.

Par-boil the potatoes until just softening.

Then put a little olive oil in the bottom of a large casserole dish (to cover the bottom of the dish), then lay on the sliced potatoes, then the cod and then top off with the rest of the vegetables

Season to taste with salt and pepper

Douse with plenty of olive oil

Put into the oven (180C) for about 20 minutes or until the potatoes underneath are soft and the tomatoes and other vegetables are to your personal taste, somewhere between 'a little withered' and 'burnt at the edges'!

Serve with brown rice to help mop up the oil. Enjoy!

There is so much more going on in the world of the Newport Medieval Ship. To keep up to date, please check out our website and follow us on Facebook (@newportship) and Twitter (@FONSnewportship)