



Friends of Newport Ship

News Sheet - May 2020

Update from the Chairman

This latest newsletter comes to you, courtesy of our new editor Liz Aiken, who has done a great job in pulling material together and keeping publication to a timetable. I hope the updated news and articles will fill a gap until such time as we can open the Ship Centre again.

The COVID-19 lockdown came upon us very suddenly. It was only on 14th March that I was running a training day for new volunteers and encouraging everyone to turn up for the opening the following week. We had a full programme of talks and visits for the coming season. And three days later we had to cancel everything, including another timber shipment from York.

But we are fortunate. Unlike many other voluntary heritage activities, the Newport Ship Project has shown itself to be remarkably resilient to the lockdown. As Peter Horleston explains below, we may lose as much as £4,000 in income this year, but we have ample reserves and the future of the project is not under threat. And we have Newport Council behind us to continue to fund the building and the curator's salary. So, thanks to everyone who is working behind the scenes, not just to keep the Friends running but to move forward with some of our research and projects.

The lockdown also gives us an opportunity to substantially overhaul the Ship Centre. When we reopen you will be pleasantly surprised at the changes. We have repainted the floor and dismantled the old wooden screen. We have a new set of display stands and updated exhibition arrangements for the tools, incorporating a video display and including the pole lathe and shaving horse, which we will use for demonstrations of traditional woodworking. We have the wonderful illustrations created by Willem Hampson of the Ship construction and Jeremy Dixon is working with Toby Jones to produce a whole new set of display panels with a completely fresh look and feel. We have new audio-visual equipment and material as well.

We do not know when we will reopen and, in the meantime, we aim to keep everyone's interest by providing additional material via our website. We have already uploaded some innovative video blogs by Liz Gulliver about the return of the last timber shipment. There are some fascinating new items which you can view, including Toby's presentation about the Ship to the University of Austin in Texas and the outcome of his visit there earlier this year to view "La Belle" the restored remains of a 17th Century vessel recovered from the Bay of Mexico. More will follow shortly!

We do not often think of the Friends as a community and some of us meet only infrequently at talks and events. But the presence of the COVID-19 virus brings home just how many of us look forward to visiting the Ship Centre, seeing acquaintances and, even if we live further away, hearing about the Ship project's events and progress. This has all been disrupted over the last few weeks but hopefully it will return before too long. In the meantime, take care and stay safe.

Bob Evans
chair@newportship.org



Introducing the New Editor

Thank you for the warm welcome. Let me introduce myself, I live in Blackwood, I blog and write Flash Fiction and currently writing a Novel based in the levels starting in 1607 after the great flood tracing a family's life from then until now. This is combined with a lifelong love of History. Another little nugget is do not expect my hair to be the same colour every time you meet me; though currently being reacquainted with my natural shade, it has been quite a shock! I volunteered after seeing a post on Facebook. This gave me the nudge I needed to take action. So Here I am Editor of Newsletter and Newssheet.



I met Chairman Bob and some of the volunteers along with a group of new volunteers on 14th March, a sunny Saturday; the clouds of Covid-19 were rumbling around us, we were washing our hands, sanitising and making our own coffees but still blissfully innocent of what was to come. We left with a cheery 'see you next Saturday', the day the Newport Ship Centre was due to open. I had arranged with Bob to go to the Centre on the Friday with my camera to take some photographs of the new exhibits and meet Toby and other volunteers helping me gain an insight into the exciting project and how to share the information, meeting everyone's expectation and requirements. Sadly, that was not to be as the dark fingers of the global threat from Covid-19 meant that the centre would not be opening as planned as Wales joined the growing number of countries locking down. A new reality has taken shape throughout April as the realisation that the lifting of restrictions will be slow and social distancing the new normal. With that challenging background following discussions with Toby & Bob it was decided that I should edit the first newsletter from a distance.

With the help of phone calls, replies to my email and zoom the material has been gathered. This was not how I imagined curating my first FONS Newssheet would be but rising to the challenge here it is.

While the centre is in lockdown I will send out regular newssheets hoping this will retain a community feel. If you have ideas for newssheet or the Newsletter please do not hesitate to email me with your thoughts – liz.aiken1@gmail.com

I look forward to being a small cog in creating an open, informative communication chain linking in with website and social media feeds. This will raise the profile and interest in the ship across Wales and beyond. I hope you enjoy reading the news it has truly been 'a baptism of fire!'

Liz Aiken

liz.aiken1@gmail.com



FONS Project Report 9 April 2020

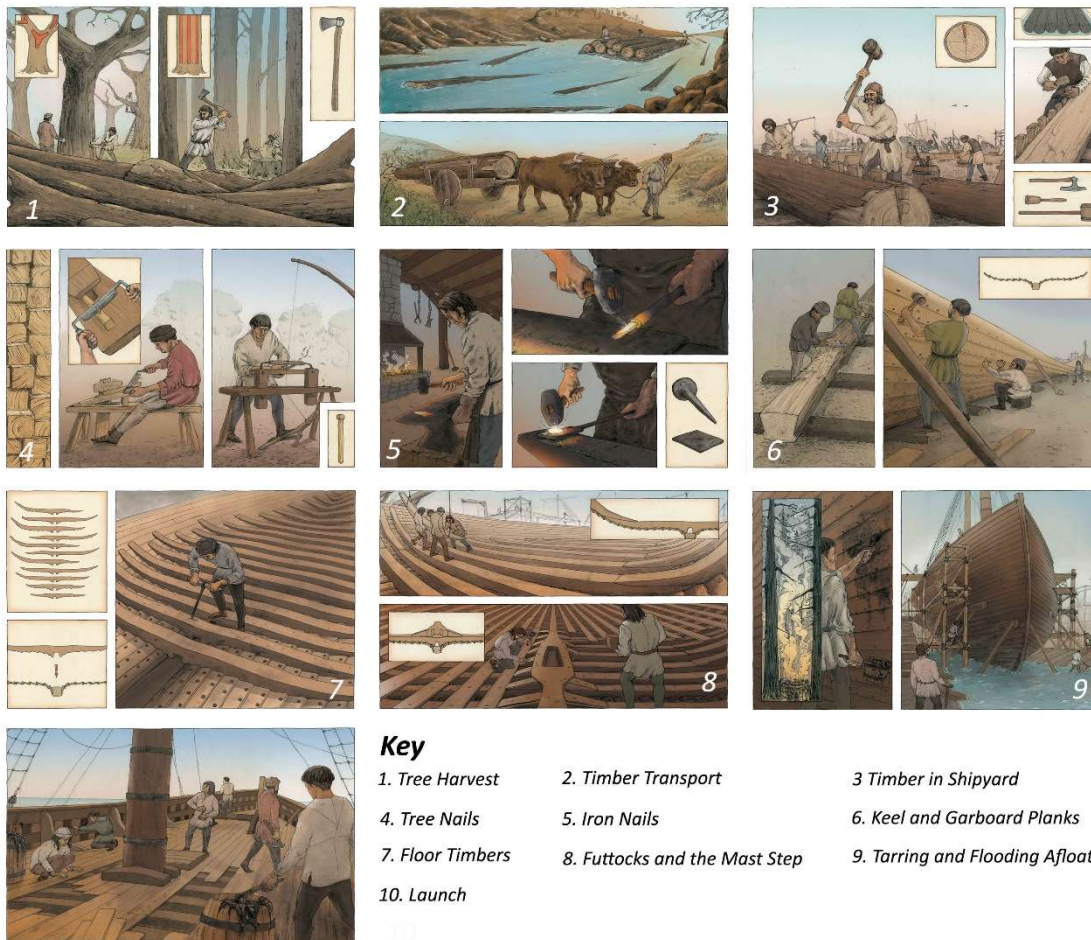
Dr. Toby Jones, Curator, Newport Medieval Ship Project

Dear FONS Members,



It has been a busy few months here at the ship centre as we prepared new exhibitions and readied the centre for reopening. Alas, current events have postponed not just the opening, but many other aspects of the ship project, including the postponing of the collection of dried timbers from York, the cancellation of the Leeds Medieval Congress, and the delay of the annual Expert Panel meeting. However, progress is still

being made. We have painted the centre floor and erected display boards complete with new images that tell the story from excavation through to eventual display. One centrepiece is the recently completed series of 10 drawings by Willem Hampsen showing the construction of the vessel, from the trees being harvested all the way through the ship being launched.



Key:

1. Tree Harvest 2. Timber Transport 3. Timber in Shipyard
 4. Tree Nails 5. Iron Nails 6. Keel and Garboard Planks
 7. Floor Timbers 8. Futtocks and the Mast Step 9. Tarring and Flooding Afloat
 10. Launch

We have constructed a new hand tool display and created a new area to showcase the pole lathe and shaving horse.

The iron artefact conservation project is approaching completion, with all of the iron artefacts now nearing the end of their chemical treatment. A higher than expected level of chlorides is being removed, highlighting the need for this remedial conservation treatment. Once this is completed, the iron artefacts will be more stable and we can make plans for their eventual display.

In February, I visited the 17th C. *La Belle* shipwreck, which is now on display in Austin, Texas. This visit was funded by ICOM (International Council of Museums) and the British Council. Whilst there, I met with the people who conserved and reassembled the vessel and also the curators who designed and manage the exhibition. I also gave several ship lectures at Texas A&M University.

This trip to Texas 15-25 February 2020 was funded by **British Council Travel Grant Scheme**



In March I went to Istanbul as part of a British Academy grant-funded project to facilitate the training of Turkish nautical archaeologists in the digital documentation of ship timbers. We have been involved in providing training in the use of the FaroArm, Laser Scanner and Rhinoceros CAD software as well as sharing our digital modelling methods and 3D printing procedures.

Thank you all for your continued support of the project!

Toby Jones

British Council Travel Grant Scheme Final Report by Dr. Toby Jones

Part 1: Organisation: Newport Medieval Ship Project - Newport Museum and Art Gallery – Newport City Council

Name: Dr. Toby Jones

Job title: Curator- Newport Medieval Ship Project

Country travelled to: United States of America

Region or cities travelled to: Austin and College Station, Texas

Museum(s) and organisation(s) visited:

Bullock Texas State History Museum in Austin, Texas

Nautical Archaeology Program at Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas

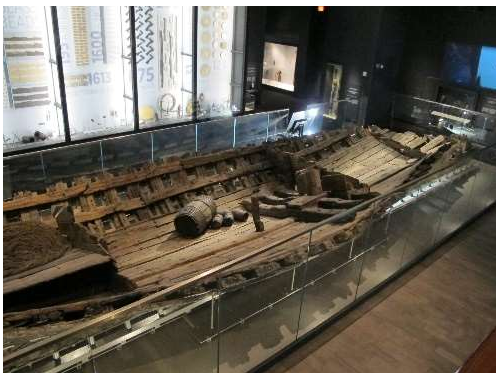
Conservation Research Laboratory, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas

Dates of visit: 15-25 February 2020



Chadburn Telegraph Restoration

I am sure many of you will have seen Toby's cry for help when he posted about the Chadburn Telegraph on Facebook.



"We are working on this old Chadburn Telegraph for the museum/ship centre and are looking for anyone with knowledge about their inner workings! I am specifically trying to determine the original shape of the copper dogs in the last image. Let me know if you can help!"



Toby persevered and he got the Chadburn working. Toby explained, "It took a bit of brain strain to figure it out...I ended up taking it completely apart.

But I had to be very careful, as all the components were either brass or glass...I didn't want to break anything as there are no spares!

The completed, refurbish and working Chadburn Telegraph



It was passed for service by my 5 year old son Rory!" as you can see on the video

Follow this link - <https://bit.ly/2WHdnIX> - for the video



The Ship Centre Library News

The Ship Centre Library continues to grow and develop. Around 1,000 titles have now been catalogued, with about 2,000 still to go! Subjects covered include maritime history, archaeology, conservation, classic texts on medieval social history, conference proceedings and local history. Most of this stock comes from the library of the late Colin Green, a strong supporter of the Ship project, but we have also benefited from small donations of books and journals from current FONS members as well as the Library of the Brunel Institute and the World Ship Society, both based in Bristol.

In 2019, the FONS trustees allocated a small budget to buy new material, and the following books were purchased on the recommendations of Toby Jones and Bob Evans:

Author	Title	Publisher	Date
Abulafia, David	The discovery of mankind	Yale University Press	2008
Abulafia, David	The great sea	Penguin	2014
Crumlin-Pederson, Ole	Viking and Iron Age expanded boats	Viking Ship Museum	2018
Crumlin-Pederson, Ole	Archaeology and the sea	Viking Ship Museum	2010
Englert, Anton	Wulfstan's voyage	Viking Ship Museum	2009
Englert, Anton	Ohtheres's voyage	Viking Ship Museum	2007
Hansen, Gitte	Everyday products in the Middle Ages	Oxbow Books	2015
Hicks, Michael	Warwick the Kingmaker	Wiley-Blackwell	2002
Ravn, Morten	Viking age war fleets	Viking Ship Museum	2016
Rich, Sara et al.	Shipwrecks and provenance	Archaeopress	2018
Webb, Adrian	A maritime history of Somerset. 3 vols.	SAHNS	c2010

The library is currently located on mobile shelving in the timber store at the Ship Centre. Although not available for browsing, the books can be virtually browsed by subject, title or author via the website at <https://www.newportship.org/archaeology-conservation/our-library>. If you are a member of FONS, you can borrow books from our library – please contact Toby Jones or Bob Evans.

Our goal is to create a working research library where scholars and others can both borrow material and use resources in situ in a research room. For this, not only do we need a dedicated Ship Museum, but sufficient funds to buy recent material, including journals. For example, the very relevant title *The Mariner's Mirror*, for which we have donated back issues, costs around £415/year.

Sian Kling



Social Media

The Newport Ship Centre may be shut due to COID-19 but the ship is still in the news and being noticed.

The power of Social Media will ensure that the Newport Medieval Ship stays in the mind of the public and added to the list of places to visit once lockdown eases.

Social Media can be used to drive traffic to specific area of the website including the link to the guidebook, and more importantly The World of the Newport Medieval Ship.



Facebook

Newport Medieval Ship Project – facebook.com/newportship

Friends of Newport Ship – facebook.com/fonsnewportship



Twitter - @NewportShip

(Please note twitter is not as active as facebook) Does anybody love the twitter-sphere and fancy making this full of vibrant tweets?



Instagram - newport_ship

As well as our posts The Ship has a wide reach. With interest and sharing within Pinterest includes Medieval Archive, local papers; medieavalists.net, and people's collective wales. This is true across all social media platforms.

The Newport Medieval Ship by Dr. Toby Jones

The Nautical Archaeology Program (Texas) welcomes Dr. Toby Jones to present "The Newport Medieval Ship: Archaeological discoveries, conservation challenges and display opportunities".

Check out the interesting talk here -

<https://www.facebook.com/nauticalarchaeology/videos/651750458906055/>

Instagram



On 24th April this was featured as the Archaeology Data Service as Today's [#FridayPhoto](#) is a silver coin found during the excavation of the Newport Medieval Ship. The photograph shows the coin as it was discovered embedded in the wooden keel and after conservation.

Medieval Shipbuilders would place coins within the timbers of a new ship for good luck and coins such as this one were used to estimate when the ship may have been built.

The Newport Ship is the most substantial late medieval vessel excavated and recovered in Britain and the dismantling and recovery of the ship has enabled detailed recording using innovative 3D digital techniques and approaches to hypothetical reconstruction.

Big shout out to Archaeology Data Service keeping the ship buzzing across social media.



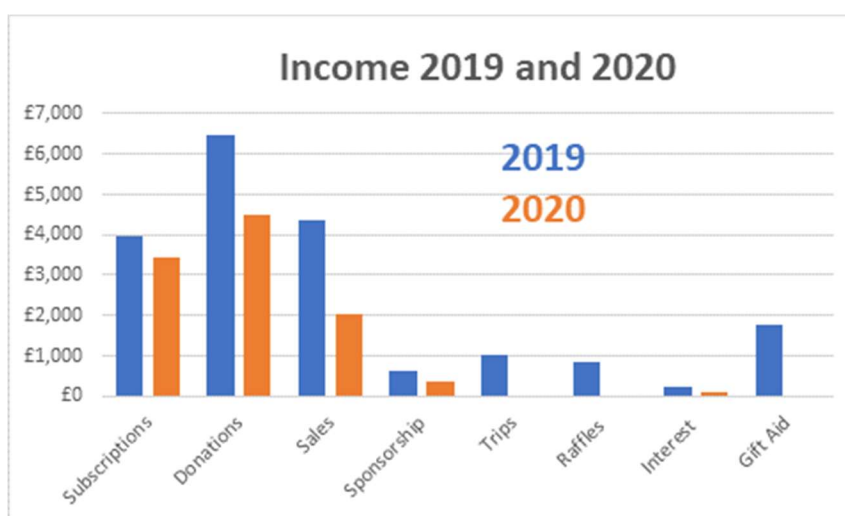
The Financial effect of the lockdown

Normally I report to the wider membership once a year at the AGM. Of course I report on a regular basis to the committee. These are, obviously, far from normal circumstances so the chairman has

asked that I give you a report on the financial effect of the lockdown on The Friends of The Newport Ship.

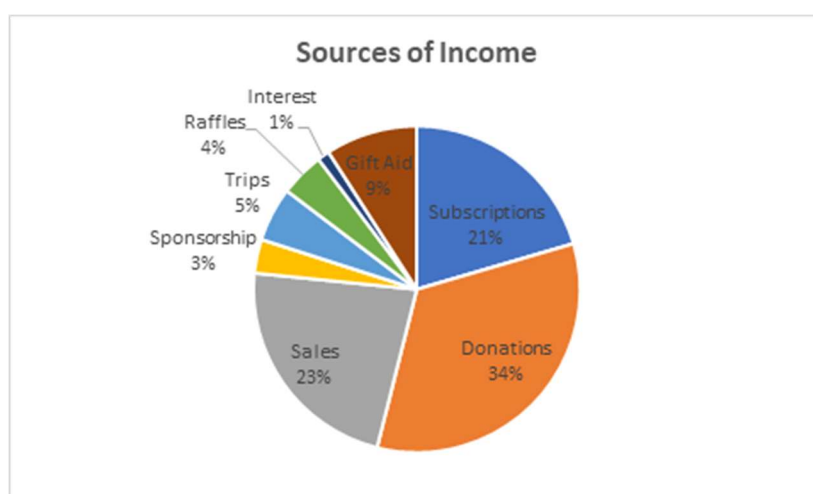
First the good news, we are in a far better place than many charities. We do not have any "fixed costs" no rent, business rates or energy costs. All paid by Newport City Council. Nor do we have any employees so our outgoings are in effect zero. We are in hibernation.

So far so good but there is a down side. Our major income streams are; membership subscriptions, donations (including from talks to groups) and the profit on retail sales. The first is not affected and in the main we have received the annual renewals. The other 2 are being reduced as we have to forego the ability to trade and give talks. I would estimate that being closed will remove an income of £4000 assuming we re-open in mid-June.



As far as the current situation is concerned: the balance sheet total is £50087, our net current assets total (almost all cash deposits in various accounts) stands at £34759.

So far this year we show a deficit of £7681 primarily explained by the funding of a major refurbishment of the visitor experience at the centre. It really is impressive so please visit as soon as you are able.



Anyone wishing a full set of accounts, e mail me and I will get a set to you.

Peter Horleston, Treasurer FONS
Petergeo.horleston@bitinternet.com

Fundraising News

Raise free funds Every time you shop online! Amazon Smile – support Friends of Newport Ship every time you buy something through Amazon. Look out for the 'Eligible for AmazonSmile donation' on the product page. Millions of products are eligible for donations and every time you buy one Amazon will make a donation to us at no cost to you. In order to take advantage of this opportunity go to smile.amazon.co.uk and select Friends of Newport Ship as your chosen charity. You can use your existing Amazon account but to qualify for the donation you must shop through the AmazonSmile website rather than the Amazon.co.uk website. Don't worry though, both the look of the screen and the shopping experience are the same! Bookmark the page on your computer or laptop to make sure you always shop on AmazonSmile. If you use Amazon on a smart phone you may want to delete your existing Amazon.co.uk app. There is currently no app for AmazonSmile but you can share the website to your phone by tapping the share button at the bottom of the website and then tapping the 'Add to home screen' icon. You will now have an AmazonSmile icon on your home screen which you can use in exactly the same way as the Amazon app with the added benefit that Amazon will donate a percentage of the purchase price to FoNS!

Easyfundraising - don't forget that if you shop online you can sign up to [easyfundraising.org.uk](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk) to support Friends of the Newport Ship. All you need to do is go to: www.easyfundraising.org.uk World of the Newport Medieval Ship Last year you may remember the Ship Centre hosted the launch of 'The World of the Newport Medieval Ship' which brings together all the current research and knowledge relating to both the Ship and the maritime history of that period. The book is a must read for anyone interested in medieval or maritime history or for those who want to better understand the ship and the world in which it sailed. Make sure you get your copy.

Purchase via website - <https://www.newportship.org/discover-the-ship/guidebook> or you can purchase a copy from Amazon.



Moving On: former Chairman, Phil Cox

After some nine years of involvement with the Newport Medieval Ship, the time has come to move onwards. My wife, Naura and I are relocating across to middle England to be closer to my family.

I took voluntary redundancy from Newport City Council in 2011 and was 'encouraged' by my late wife, Nanette, to find something to keep me busy. As she had been on the original 'Save Our Ship' campaign alongside Charles Ferris, Jean Gray and others who have formed the backbone of the 'Friends', my first role as a guide at the old Ship Centre in Maesglas was inevitable.

It was not long before I was co-opted onto the FoNS Committee to assist particularly in publicity and PR. From there, my permanent place on the Committee was assured, and when Peter Hayward stepped down, I was nominated as Chairman and duly elected. Peter's work in creating our first business plan was vital to put our thoughts in order, and perhaps the future role of FoNS now needs to be re-examined in the light of progress.

During my five year tenure, we focused on getting more visitors, more members and more sponsors, to build a strong support base from which we can move forward from the conservation phase of the project and help the project owners, Newport City Council, to develop plans for the re-assembly and display phase. Visitor numbers increased thanks to the huge effort and commitment shown by a

dedicated team to open the new Ship Centre at Queensway Meadows on a regular basis. This was further increased by bringing in the younger generation particularly through Scouts and Guides and cunningly getting them to come back on the next regular open day along with the rest of their family!

As with all projects, the focus needed to change and that required new leadership. I was very pleased that Bob Evans stepped forward to take over as Chairman, and bring a new set of skills to the project. I was pleased to support Bob as Vice Chairman for a limited time to ensure a seamless transfer.

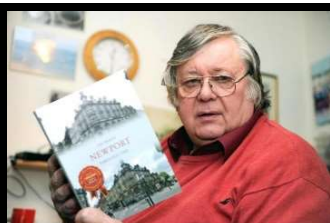
I remain a committed member of the Friends, albeit from afar. I will remain an ardent ambassador for the project and hope to be able to give talks in the Midlands and the East of England, spreading the word about the project and stimulate further support from relevant groups.

Given the current lockdown, our move date is hazy, but I do hope that before we depart, I will be able to visit the Ship Centre, see the new vibrant displays that have been created and pick up on the new threads that they show. I have to meet up again with those who have supported me in all my endeavours and made my time with FoNS so enjoyable.

I am already looking for new volunteering opportunities around my new home, and I'm confident that I will remain active - probably in a nautical project (despite the distance from the coast!) and perhaps with U3A and Local History Societies.

Finally, I must put out a huge thank you to those who served on the Committee during my time and to all the active members who provided the crew for the Ship Centre.

Philip Cox



Jan Preece 1948 - 2019

It is with great sadness that we note the passing of one of our founder members, Mr Jan Preece who died last November aged 71. Jan, named in acknowledgement of his Polish ancestry was a keen local historian having written 5 books on Newport's heritage and for quite a long time ran the Pill Heritage Centre. This was a private museum which had no admission fee, covering the area's history illustrated by his extensive photograph collection and interpreted through his great talent as a model maker.

He was a great champion of local causes and the obvious "go to" person to found the Save Our Ship campaign. Typical of his generosity, he gave the society the use of the Heritage Centre which became our first address. His personal contact with Simon Rutherford of the Chepstow Archaeological Society provided FONS not only with its first chairman but also contact with the British Council of Archaeology and The Society of Nautical Research. Both invaluable to FONS' standing, elevating it from what had started as just a street protest.

After the Heritage Centre closed Jan continued to promote the area's history through his "quiet woman's row" website. Five years ago Jan suffered the loss of his wife, Sally and more recently his own health deteriorated. Despite this he remained active through the website and in his writing, working on a 6th book in the last year of his life. Jan was a true Friend of the Ship and the project should always remember and be grateful for his contribution.

Charles Ferris

