



SCARBOROUGH MARITIME HERITAGE CENTRE

SPRING 2021

New Exhibition

After a long lockdown we are pleased to announce we will reopen on May 17th with a new exhibition commemorating the 120th anniversary of the end of Queen Victoria's reign in 1901. We look back at the huge growth Scarborough underwent during her reign whilst acknowledging the poverty and social upheaval that accompanied it. We will look at the growth of the town, new schools, churches and major buildings. We look at the fishing industry, the visitor attractions, the growth of manufacturing and mass marketing, poverty and childhood mortality. Scarborough's Town Crier will open the exhibition that includes Alan Booth's MBE and bells (see page 4).



The statue of Queen Victoria, shown above left, stands outside the town hall and is one of only seven castings made from the original sculpture by Charles Bell Birch. It was unveiled in 1903. The photograph, above right, is of a 'Rawling's' bathing machine. These were extremely popular during the Victorian era. Many men still bathed naked whilst women were covered from head to toe in their bathing costumes and caps!

New Donations

A tankard belonging to Commander Frank H Feest BSc RN was donated to us by his widow, Barbara. Frank joined the Royal Navy in 1956 and was appointed to HMS Scarborough in 1961. He was the Instructor officer to the Squadron. HMS Scarborough visited here in August 1962 and the Mayor was piped aboard. There was a Church Service and children's party. The ship had a busy itinerary and visited Iceland for Fisheries Protection, Norway, Malta, La Spezia, Gibraltar, Taranto, Piraeus and Barcelona.

H.M.S. Scarborough was a first-rate anti-submarine, Type 12, Whitby Class frigate, launched in 1955 by the Countess of Scarborough. The ship led a busy life, as the Leader of the 5th Frigate Squadron. She circumnavigated the globe visiting many countries and taking part in some important world events including the Atomic Bomb Tests (operation Grapple) at Christmas Island in the Pacific 1958.

H.M.S. Scarborough was involved in the usual naval training exercises and patrols including Icelandic patrols during the Cod War. From 1964 until 1972 she was responsible for providing sea training for young officer cadets, engine room artificers and Royal Marine officers from Britain and officer cadets from many other countries.

She also visited Scarborough in June 1971 and May 1972. She was decommissioned and paid off on the 7th August 1972. On 31st August 1977 she was broken up at Blyth Ship-breakers.

Frank retired in October 1980 and passed away in August 2018.





A boatswain's call / pipe / bosun's whistle was donated to us by the family of the late Mr H Feather. It is used on naval ships. The pipe consists of a narrow tube (the gun) that directs air over a metal sphere (the buoy) with a hole in the top. The player opens and closes the hand over the hole to change the pitch. The rest of the pipe consists of a "keel", a flat piece of metal beneath the gun that holds the call together, and the "shackle", a key ring that connects a long silver or brass chain that sits around the collar, when in ceremonial uniform.

Historically the boatswain's call was used to pass commands to the crew when the voice could not be heard over the sounds of the sea. Because of its high pitch, it could be heard over the activities of the crew and bad weather. It is now used in traditional bugle calls such as *Evening Colours / Sunset*. Piping aboard is done when flag-rank officers or an important guest is boarding a Royal Navy ship. They would hoist them up from a small boat using a bosun's chair and when the weather was too rough for a ladder. The bosun would use his call to direct the 'side boys' in the hoisting of the chair.

The following are some other commands given by the bosun's pipe.

Hauling a line, rope or anchor; Lowering a bosun's chair; Away boats, to order a boat to leave the ship's side; Call the Boatswain's mates; All Hands on Deck; Command for silence, an order to follow; Pipe down, a dismissal of all the crew not on watch; Pipe to any meal; Carry on, dismiss the crew back to their duties.

New Donations cont'd

We are pleased to have been given the MBE, medals, bells and certificates of Scarborough Town Crier, Alan Booth MBE, who passed away in 2020. Alan was Scarborough's town crier for 31 years, a record for the Yorkshire coast, and held the titles of National and European town crier champion for several years in the late 1980s and early 1990s. He was also an honorary Freeman of Scarborough, in recognition of his work in raising the profile of the town.

He was born in Wath-upon-Deerne, near Rotherham, and began his working life as a lathe turner before National Service took him to Singapore. He returned to his old job for a while before buying a guesthouse on Scarborough's North Marine Road in 1968. Once installed in the resort he became involved with the local hotels association, at a time when auditions were being held for the role of town crier. He recalled that he put his name forward only to make up the numbers and once elected was embarrassed by the regalia of office, initially confining his activities to back alleyways, where he would be seen by fewer people.

Eventually, the role that he had agreed to take on just for a year, took him to Australia and Canada. He was awarded an MBE in 2005 but sadly passed away in 2020, age 89.

“Oyez, oyez, oyez!”

This is the call or cry of the town crier, now usually only heard at ceremonial events and fetes. It would however have been a common cry on the streets of medieval England. 'Oyez' comes from the French *ouïr* ('to listen') and means "Hear ye". The town crier would begin his cry with these words, accompanied by the ringing of a large hand bell to attract attention. It was the job of the crier or bellman to inform the townspeople of the latest news, proclamations, bylaws and any other important information, as at this time most people were illiterate and could not read. The cry would end with the words, '*God save the King (or Queen)*'.

Having read out his message, the town crier would then attach it to the doorpost of the local inn. Posting a notice is the reason why some newspapers are called 'The Post'. Proclaiming the news was not however their only role: indeed, their original role was to patrol the

streets after dark, acting as peace keepers, arresting miscreants and taking them to the stocks for punishment. It was also his job to make sure fires were damped down for the night after the curfew bell. The crier attended public hangings to read out the reasons and then to help take the body down. The key requirements of the role were the ability to read, a loud voice and an air of authority. Bellmen would be paid for each proclamation they made: in the 18th century the rate was between 2d and 4d per cry.



AGM News

We delayed our AGM due to the lockdown but hope to hold a physical meeting at the end of June, all being well. An agenda, annual report and accounts summary will be sent out to you three weeks before the due date. It will be a chance to see each other again after such a long time. We hope you will be able to attend.

Thirsk teacher rows solo across Atlantic

A 21-year-old swimming teacher has become the youngest woman to row solo across the Atlantic Ocean. Jasmine Harrison, from Thirsk in North Yorkshire, set off on her 3,000-mile (4,828km) journey from La Gomera in the Canary Islands in December. She docked in Antigua earlier, completing the journey in 70 days, three hours and 48 minutes.

Ms Harrison decided to sign up for the Talisker Whisky Atlantic Challenge three years ago after watching the finale of the 2017 event. Asked about her epic challenge, she said it had been a mix of "good and bad memories", but said she had relished the chance to escape from day-to-day life. "There's nothing like it, actually getting away from everything - social media, bad news, from literally everything," she said. Ms Harrison's crossing was not without difficulty and she capsized just two days before crossing the finishing line, injuring her elbow in the process.

During the crossing, Ms Harrison would row for two hours and sleep for two hours on rotation. Despite being cut off from the world, she was still able to speak to her mother every day via satellite phone. Asked what she was most looking forward to after stepping on to dry land, she replied: "Food, definitely food." As well as rowing into the record books, Ms Harrison has also raised more than £10,000 for charity. The previous youngest female solo ocean rower was 22-year-old Katie Spatz from the USA who rowed the Atlantic east-to-west between 3 January and 14 March 2010. The youngest person to have made the crossing solo is student Lukas Haitzmann, who completed it in 2019 at the age of 18.

(Report from BBC Online)

Roman Remains off Filey

Divers are planning to search for the remains of what experts believe is a Roman harbour off Filey Brigg. Known locally as 'Spittal Rocks, they can only be seen for about two weeks a year when tides are very low. Chris Robinson, co-ordinator of the Filey Brigg Research Group said 'The rock structure is up to six metres below water level'. It could have been a Roman pier or jetty. The Romans had a watchtower and signal station overlooking Filey Bay. Six years ago the Heritage Lottery Fund awarded £48,000 to investigate the underwater heritage and investigation into a wooden shipwreck believed to be the warship Bonhomme Richard.

(Report from Scarborough News)

Old Scarborough Lifeboats

The ill-fated Scarborough ECJR lifeboat, in which three crewmembers died in 1954, lies on the shore of a Scottish loch whilst the Amelia, which served the town from 1978-91, is languishing in an old marina in South Ferriby, near Hull. Photographs of the ECJR photos were posted on Facebook by Graham Drydale to mark the 66th anniversary of one of the worst disasters to befall Scarborough RNLi. Coxswain Jack Sheader and crewmembers Francis Bayes and John Cammish died when the boat capsized in the harbour mouth on a stormy day in December 1954. "I was very surprised to discover the fate of the lifeboat," Graham said. "ECJR is lying abandoned on the shores of Loch Harport on the Isle of Skye. A bit of a sad end for a brave boat". ECJR was Scarborough's first self-righting lifeboat and was one of only five in her class to be fitted with twin engines. She was built by Groves & Guttridge in Cowes in 1950 and entered service in 1951. The ECJR was only slightly damaged during the 1954 storm and was back on service within 48 hours. The wooden vessel carried on saving lives at Scarborough until 1956, when it was succeeded by the Annie Ronald & Isabella Forrest.

Graham's post has stirred up conflicting opinions on what should happen to the remains of the ECJR. Some think it would be a fitting end for the old lifeboat to be brought back to Scarborough, restored and put on display as a memorial. However, others, especially relatives and friends of the crew who died, feel the ECJR should stay where it is or even be burnt. The tragedy is commemorated by an annual memorial service at St Mary's Church and a plaque in the lifeboat house.

The Oakley-class Amelia lifeboat was sold by the RNLi in 1992 and stood in a Grimsby boatyard for a while, according to current owner Richard Sheard. It was then sold to the Shipwreck Treasure Museum in the old clay-port of Charlestown in Cornwall, where it was on display until about 2017. It slowly deteriorated and was no longer required when the museum was bought by Tim Smith of the Eden Project. It went into storage on a Cornish campsite then sat in a farmyard until it was offered free to a good home. Richard, who lives near Hull, took the boat to South Ferriby in March 2019. Richard wants to restore the Amelia to its former glory.

(Report by Dave Barry in Scarborough News)

5 Star Review on Google

"I think I was expecting a much larger place with exhibits and things and so was taken slightly aback to walk into a smallish shop. However it soon became clear that the true treasures of the centre are the guys, the volunteers. I used to live on an old firefighting boat in the early seventies and always wondered what had happened to her. Obviously thousands of vessels come through Scarborough and so the guys hadn't heard of her. I returned home slightly disappointed but was contacted a few days later with lots of information about the boat, including photos and I was very happy to hear that she had been rescued and renovated by a new loving owner and enjoyed a new lease of life in the States. They even supplied details of how to contact the new owner, which I did. I couldn't quite believe the trouble they went to, especially Les, contacting retired fishermen etc. It made me realise that boats are just objects, the real heritage is the people especially the older ones. If you visit the centre please donate a little to keep it going". Shawn Halford

In Memory

We were sad to receive news of the death of Jim Sheader, age 99, who was a well loved and respected fisherman in Scarborough's old town. Jim took part in several of our projects including a video interview about old superstitions (it can be seen on our website). The funeral cortege passed the lifeboat house before a service with close family & friends in Woodlands crematorium on 11th November 2020.

We are run entirely by volunteers and public donations.

We always need volunteers. No special knowledge or skills are required.

Please contact us if you can spare a few hours a week?

Thank you



Scarborough Maritime Heritage Centre

Charity number: 1144532

45 Eastborough, Scarborough, YO11 1NH

Tel: 01723 369361 Email: scarboroughmaritime@yahoo.com

Website: www.scarboroughsmaritimeheritage.org.uk