

INTERNATIONAL MARITIME HISTORY ASSOCIATION

Newsletter September 2021

Welcome to the Third Newsletter for 2021

With increasing numbers of “double vaccinated” people and the potential development of vaccine passports, there is hope that international travel will revive in 2022. While most of us will have “lost” at least two years of international travel, it greatly improves prospects for our conference which is on track to be held from June 28 to July 02 in Porto.

I am very pleased to report that the Executive has approved the renewal of the contract with SAGE to publish *The International Journal of Maritime History*. I thank David Starkey, Executive members, and all others who contributed to this outcome. Special thanks go to Miriam Hodge, Sage’s Senior Publishing Editor, for her efficient and cooperative approach to the negotiations. With the renewal of this contract and the appointment of the new editorial team in Leiden, the future of our flagship journal is secure.

Just a reminder that that you can renew your membership for 2021 via our website <https://imha.info/>.

My thanks go to Dr Ian Chambers for his voluntary help with producing this newsletter.

From the President
Emeritus Professor Malcolm Tull



The \$2.6 billion USS *South Dakota* (SSN 790) is the newest, most-advanced addition to the US Navy’s Virginia-class fleet of nuclear-powered, fast-attack submarines.

How much cod and herring?

The NorFish project has published a review of 25 North Atlantic fisheries in the early modern period. Total landings vastly exceeded previous assessments and more than doubled between 1520 and 1620 from about 220,000 metric tonnes (t) to 460,000 t. Supplies of cod and herring to the European market peaked in 1788 at more than 1 million t before the unrest connected with the French Revolution brought many fisheries to a temporary halt. The authors propose the concept of Accelerated Marine Extraction to signify two periods, c.1540–1600 and c. 1730–1790, when rapidly increasing cod and herring fisheries exceeded human demographic growth and almost doubled the supplies of fish protein per capita. The results fundamentally shift our understanding of the scale of Atlantic fisheries in the past and underline the role of marine resources for European societies.

Holm, P., Nicholls, J., Hayes, P. W., Ivinson, J., Allaire, B., Accelerated Extractions of North Atlantic Cod and Herring, 1520-1790. *Fish and Fisheries*. 2021;00:1–19. The paper and all supporting data are open access: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/faf.12598>

Source: Professor Poul Holm, Professor of Environmental History, Director, Trinity Centre for Environmental Humanities, Trinity College Dublin, Ireland.

CALL FOR PAPERS The Maritime World in Legal History

A major stream of the **Third Legal Histories of Empire Conference to be held at Maynooth University, Ireland, 30 June-2 July 2022** will focus on the maritime world of connections, places, laws and people moving within and between empires across the globe.

Papers on questions impacting on labour are particularly welcome but all areas of maritime history are relevant for the Maritime World stream. They may be by individuals or panels. Abstracts should be sent to Diane Kirkby, University of Technology Sydney Diane.Kirkby@uts.edu.au by **31 October 2021**.

For individual papers

An abstract of no more than 250 words
Biographic details of no more than 200 words
Your time zone relative to Irish Standard Time (UCT + 1)

For Panels (of no more than 4 speakers: a chair and/or commentator can be included)

A panel abstract of no more than 250 words and
Individual paper abstracts of no more than 200 words
Biographic details of no more than 200 words
A timezone for your panel relative to Irish Standard Time (UCT + 1)

Format: Face to Face with some provision for virtual presentations and attendance.

Please note: The Max Planck Institute has generously offered some scholarships for scholars from the Global South. For information and instructions see <https://lhbe.org/scholarships/>

New Books

Phillip Reid, PhD, was the featured guest historian on Ben Franklin's World, the leading podcast for early American history, on 17 August, talking about his book, *The Merchant Ship in the British Atlantic, 1600--1800: Continuity and Innovation in a Key Technology* (Brill, 2020).

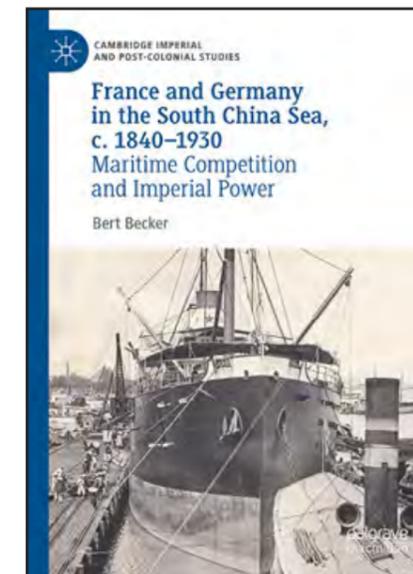
In *The Merchant Ship in the British Atlantic, 1600—1800*, Phillip Reid refutes the long-held assumption that merchant ship technology in the British Atlantic during the two centuries of its development was static for all intents and purposes, and that whatever incremental changes took place in it were inconsequential to the development of the British Empire and its offshoots.

Drawing on a unique combination of evidence from both traditional and unconventional sources, Phillip Reid shows how merchants, shipwrights, and mariners used both proven principles and adaptive innovations in hulls, rigs, and steering systems to manage high physical and financial risks.

See:

Episode page: <https://benfranklinworld.com/episode-309-merchant-ships-of-the-eighteenth-century/>

Book page: <https://brill.com/view/title/55869>



Bert Becker, *France and Germany in the South China Sea, c. 1840-1930. Maritime competition and Imperial Power*. (Palgrave Macmillan, 2021).

This book explores imperial power and the transnational encounters of shipowners and merchants in the South China Sea from 1840 to 1930. With British Hong Kong and French Indochina on its northern and western shores, the 'Asian Mediterranean' was for almost a century a crucible of power and an axis of economic struggle for coastal shipping companies from various nations. Merchant steamers shipped cargoes and passengers between ports of the region. Hong Kong, the global port city, and the colonial ports of Saigon and Haiphong developed into major hubs for the flow of goods and people, while Guangzhouwan survived as an almost forgotten outpost of Indochina. While previous research in this field has largely remained within the confines of colonial history, this book uses the examples of French and German companies operating in the South China Sea to demonstrate the extent to which transnational actors and business networks interacted with imperial power and the process of globalisation.

Bert Becker is Associate Professor in Modern European History at the University of Hong Kong. He has written prize-winning biographies on Georg Michaelis, the German chancellor of 1917, and Michael Jebsen, shipowner and politician in Imperial Germany. His research interests include the maritime and business histories of Hong Kong, China and Vietnam

Not to be missed: Willem van de Velde & Son exhibition

Retrospective exhibition of the maritime painters Van de Velde with important loans from the collections of international museums, as well as from two royal collections

From 1 October 2021 to 27 March 2022, The National Maritime Museum (Het Scheepvaartmuseum) is presenting a retrospective of the artists Willem van de Velde the Elder and his son Willem van de Velde the Younger. They belong to the absolute crème de la crème of 17th-century maritime painters. The Willem van de Velde & Son exhibition sheds light on the Van de Velde's family business, their eye for detail and atmosphere, superb craftsmanship and the position as 'war correspondent' of the father Willem. Never before has The National Maritime Museum brought together this many art objects by these two painters. Two wall tapestries recently acquired by the museum depicting the battle of Solebay in 1672 are on display for the first time. Michael Huijser, director of The National Maritime Museum: "This is the exhibition that The National Maritime Museum has always wanted to organise."



Collection loans

In addition to its own collection, the exhibition also includes numerous loans from, among others, the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, the Mauritshuis, and the Rijksmuseum. Loans from both British and Dutch royal collections will also be on display. British Queen Elizabeth II is loaning the paintings *Holmes's Bonfire, the burning of Dutch merchant ships between Terschelling and Vlieland* (Willem van de Velde de Oude, 1676), *The Royal Escape in a breeze* (Van de Velde the Younger, ca. 1675) and *The 'Golden Leeuw' at Sea in Heavy Weather* (Willem van de Velde de Jonge, 1671) for the exhibition. From the Dutch Royal Collections, the pen drawing *Vloot op de rede* can be seen (Willem van de Velde the Elder, ca. 1650). The painting usually has a permanent place in King Willem-Alexander's workroom in the Royal Palace of Amsterdam and can also be viewed there by the general public.

Jeroen van der Vliet, curator of the exhibition: "The fact that so many different museums and no fewer than two royal collections are making such a generous contribution to the exhibition underscores the international standing of both artists."

War correspondent

Famous are the intricate pen drawings by Willem van de Velde the Elder. These sketches in ink were made on canvas or on panels in the size of a large painting. Van de Velde was often present at major battles himself, sailing around in a small sailing ship, just like a real 'embedded journalist'. He would sketch the battle scenes on paper and later painted them in his studio. In the work *Episode uit de zeeslag in de Sont* (ca. 1660), Van de Velde has depicted himself sailing amongst the numerous ships engaged in fierce battle (collection Stedelijk Museum Alkmaar).

About the exhibition

The Willem van de Velde & Son *retrospective exhibition* takes the visitor on a journey through the Van de Velde's maritime world and winds its way past rough sketches, calm seascapes, dramatic storms and impressive naval battles. Willem van de Velde the Elder (1611-1693) excelled in detailed pen drawings and Willem van de Velde the Younger (1633-1711) in atmospheric oil paintings.

This is the first time that so many works by both artists will be on display together. Father and son Van de Velde had a flourishing and internationally operating family studio that lasted for seventy years and belonged to the pinnacle of 17th-century maritime painting. Initially, they were successful in the Dutch Republic, but from 1672 onwards, they worked at the English royal court. Two wall tapestries recently acquired by the museum depicting the battle of Solebay in 1672 stem from a royal commission to Willem van de Velde the Elder. These Solebay wall tapestries are one of the highlights of the exhibition.

Willem van de Velde & Son Exhibition

From 1 October 2021 to 27 March 2022

The National Maritime Museum

www.hetscheepvaartmuseum.nl/vandavelde

Publication and programme

The publication *Willem van de Velde & Son* will be issued by Thoth publishers (in Dutch and English) to coincide with the exhibition. The exhibition will also include a programme of lectures, guided tours and a study tour. There is an audio tour for the exhibition, in which various guests reflect on the work of the Van de Velde together with artist and presenter Lucas De Man.

Funds

This exhibition has been made possible thanks to contributions from Het Compagnie Fonds, VriendenLoterij, the Mondriaan Fund, Fonds 21, the Turing Foundation, the Prince Bernhard Culture Fund, the Zabawas Foundation, the Nico Nap Foundation, the Samenwerkende Maritieme Fondsen and the Gravin van Bylandt Foundation. The acquisition of the Solebay wall tapestries was made possible thanks to contributions from the Dutch Rembrandt Association (partly thanks to its UK Circle Fund), the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, the VriendenLoterij, the Mondriaan Fund, the Samenwerkende Maritieme Fondsen, the Vereeniging Nederlandsch Historisch Scheepvaartmuseum (The Association of Dutch Historical Maritime museums) and Het Compagnie Fonds.

Member News

Dr. Ingo Heidbrink, Professor of History, been selected Chair of the History Department at Old Dominion University.

Dr Michaela Barnard has been appointed Head of Education at Christ Church Canterbury University and left the University of Hull on 1 August.



The Burning of the Royal James (Later in the Day), Thomas Poyntz and Willem van de Velde de Oude, 1685-1688.

Press preview

On Tuesday 28 September between 10.00 am and 12.00 pm, journalists will have the opportunity to preview the exhibition. You can register for this by contacting [Marleen Smit](#). To schedule an interview on that morning (e.g., with the curator of the exhibition): please contact Marleen Smit beforehand.

For more information or interview requests, please contact:

[Marleen Smit](#)

hoofd marketing & communicatie

+31 (0) 6 401 393 06

The Great Circle

The journals of the International Maritime History Association and that of the Australian Association for Maritime History (AAMH) are critical to promoting the study of international and local maritime history. The latest issue of the AAMH's journal *The Great Circle* has just been released and explores some local maritime history with an international context.

Michael Lee Wing investigates some previously unexplored letters by the American John Minor Maury on his time on the French Polynesian island of Nuku Hiva. Jeroen Overweel reviews the English – Dutch rivalry in eastern Indonesia and Australia and the founding of Merkus-Ord and Heather Campbell writes on the career and loss of the steam tug *Escort*.

The final paper is by Dr Peter A Gunn who uses family papers to explain disagreements about the inscription of 'HMC Mermaid' on a boab tree in northern Australia. The inscription was ordered by navigator Lt Philip Parker King RN in his 1820. The HM Cutter *Mermaid* was built of teak in Calcutta and captained by King to explore and map Australia's shores. Peter Gunn also explores how time and ill-informed speculation about Aboriginal, British and Indonesian languages played a role in misinterpreting the origins of a place name.

Source: Peter Ridgway, Executive member, Australian Association for Maritime History

Conferences

From: Maria Fusaro

October 2021 sees the launch of a new exhibition curated by Helen Berry, a Professor of History and Head of the History Department at the University of Exeter, together with a programme of exciting workshops, seminars and public events involving several other Exeter historians (James Davey, Elin Jones and Chris Sandal-Wilson), in association with Exeter's Centre for Maritime Historical Studies. Based around the previously-hidden history of George King, a former 'foundling' born in the late-1700s, the exhibition uncovers the gripping story of George's life as an ordinary seaman, based upon his own first-hand account of his life. This includes George's vivid first-hand account of fighting at one of the most iconic sea battles in British history, the Battle of Trafalgar, and his worldwide travels as a merchant sailor. The exhibition considers the shared histories and legacies of empire, from the perspective of someone born into poverty and raised in institutional care. It features creative responses to the exhibits with original work by Ingrid Pollard, a leading contemporary British artist, a Trafalgar Day talk, sea soundscape performance and workshops, and other special events, including community engagement activities on storytelling and resilience-building for young people in the care system today, and reflections on PTSD and the experiences of war. Exhibition launches on 15th October and runs at the Foundling Museum, London until February 27th .'

<https://foundlingmuseum.org.uk/events/fighting-talk-one-boys-journey-from-abandonment-to-traffic/>

IMHA 2020 - New call for papers

The conference will now take place between June 28 – July 02, 2022. Most of the accepted proposals for IMHA 2020 were moved to the new calendar. However, some slots were left to fill. This second call for papers intends to address the limited number of openings. It also allows confirmed participants to submit changes to previously accepted papers and/or panels (in that case, please choose the option "Changes to previous (accepted) submission"). October 15, 2021 is the deadline.

If you expressed the commitment to keep your confirmed paper/panel for 2022 and don't have changes to be reviewed by the Scientific Committee, please don't fill this new form.

<https://imha2020.com/call-for-papers/>

Source: The Organizing Committee

Continuity and Change in an Age of Uncertainty

The 2021 Indian Ocean Studies Conference to be held on 12 and 13 November in Perth and Fremantle, Western Australia, is generating significant international and local interest. A wide range of topics will be covered including maritime history and trade, defence and strategic studies, environmental studies and the Indian Ocean as a disease zone.

The Sheridan Institute of Higher Education together with the Australian Association for Maritime History and the Western Australian Museum are delighted to announce that Associate Professor Richard Vokes, University of Western Australia and Graeme Henderson, the foundation director of the Western Australian Maritime Museum will deliver the keynote speeches.

Associate Professor Richard Vokes, will review the role of the Indian Ocean in globalisation and proposing what a new globalisation might look like post Covid and Graeme Henderson will explore how Australia's Indian Ocean territories of Cocos (Keeling), and Christmas Island came to be the last Indian Ocean islands to be settled.

The first day of the conference will be held at the WA Maritime Museum in Fremantle and the second day at Sheridan Institute of Higher Education in Perth. Overseas delegates will deliver papers online. Further details including registration can be found at: <https://sheridan.edu.au/index.php/extensions/2021-indian-ocean-conference>



SHERIDAN
INSTITUTE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

INDIAN OCEAN STUDIES CONFERENCE 2021

'Change and Continuity in an Age of Uncertainty.'

12-13 November 2021



- Maritime History & Trade
- Education & Communities
- Faith & Culture
- Disease & Disease Control
- Environmental Studies
- Defence & Strategic Studies

VENUE: Day One - WA Maritime Museum
Day Two - Sheridan Institute of Higher Education

Early-Bird Registrations close 18 October 2021

REGISTER NOW!

sheridan.edu.au/index.php/extensions/2021-indian-ocean-conference

08 6222 4222 enquiries@sheridan.edu.au



In memorandum

John Bach 1923- 2021, a leading Australian maritime historian
A tribute by his partner Dr Hilary Purves



John Percival Spence Bach was born in Sydney on the 8th of July 1923 to Blanche and Percival Bach. His sister Jacqueline was born two years later, and they remained very close for the rest of their lives. John's father, an English sea captain, received his annual leave in the UK, only fleetingly visiting Australia and parenting from afar. Both of John's parents died while he was in his early teens and John regretted very much not having known his father well and, as an adult, not at all.

John was educated at Sydney Boys' High School where he excelled at athletics, in particular, the high jump. He maintained this fitness for nearly all his life by scrupulously doing the Canadian Air Force 5bx exercises. He continued his education at the University of Sydney as a theology student before enlisting in the RAAF, seeing action in Europe as a navigator with 463 Squadron Lancaster's of the RAF Bomber Command and attaining the rank of flight lieutenant. In England he married Joan, the first of his three wives, and brought her back to Australia. He finished his BA degree with honours while abandoning his previous theological ambitions and becoming a confirmed atheist.

For 2 years he worked as a flight navigator for Qantas and then for a further two years he owned and operated a commercial boat shed in Port Hacking, Sydney. Here he met with John Neale, a ten-year-old boat enthusiast who enrolled himself as John's helper and remained a great friend and sailing companion for the rest of John's life. The experience of running a boatshed taught John that he was not cut out for any commercial enterprise, so he embraced academia and obtained a position as research assistant in History at the University of New South Wales. He was seconded to the Commonwealth government to prepare a full-length history of the Australian Pearl shelling industry to be used by the government in dealing with Japanese claims to fishing rights within Australian waters.

In 1954 he was appointed the first History lecturer in the University College of Newcastle. Here he made another life-long friend in Bernard share, an Irishman and lecturer in the English Department and married Mary Langwell. John wrote his doctoral thesis on the Royal Navy in the southwest Pacific.

Proudly supported by



International Maritime History Association

The research for this was done mainly in London where John spent all his sabbatical leaves living with Jackie and her husband, Tod and bonding with their two children, Kelly and Jason. Because of this thesis, John was commissioned to write a maritime history of Australia which was published in 1976 and has remained the standard work on the subject. In the meantime, John had married Robyn Ivorak, a lecturer in the English Department of the now fully fledged University. They had a daughter, Catharine, who sadly predeceased John.

John was a member of multitudinous University and outside committees, many of which he chaired in his usual meticulous fashion. I shall only mention a few. The Australian Netherlands committee on old Dutch shipwrecks, a Commonwealth, committee concerned with the establishment of a National Maritime Museum, the Maritime Archaeology Panel of the New South Wales Heritage Office and the Australian Association for Maritime History, whose journal, *The Great Circle*, John edited. In 1992 he was awarded an Order of Australia Medal for services to Maritime History. He was also awarded the Museum of Western Australia Medal.

John lectured for many years on Chinese and Japanese history and gave a fourth-year class on "Society and the Historian". He was a popular and inspiring lecturer of which more will be said later. In his later years at the university John was Head of Department and retired in 1985 to dedicate himself ongoing research and the upbringing of my child, Timothy. We had in 1981 picked up the threads of a previous relationship and begun a partnership which was to last 40 years until his death.

Works published after John's retirement are *The Australia Station*, an account of the Royal Navy in the southwest Pacific, and the *Bligh Notebook*, which he deciphered, annotated and introduced for publication by the National Library of Australia, obviously the perfect scholar for this job since he was a sea faring professional navigator. He also continued to review books for the journal *The Great Circle*.

Considering all his commitments and achievements it would be easy to believe that he had no time for leisure activities. But actually, he was a dedicated yachtsman nearly all his life, racing on Lake Macquarie in *JoyJoy*, spending weekends picnicking at Wangi Point in the various *Primaveras* or spending the night aboard at Pulbah Island, sometimes with my cat aboard. Much time was spent maintaining his vessels, varnishing the woodwork, antifouling the hull and undertaking carpentry jobs made difficult by the fact that there are no right angles on a boat. His yachts were always immaculately kept. John also loved classical music and we attended operas together. In the school holidays John loved to go hiking with Tim and/or myself. Our favourite places, the Warrumbungles, the Yorkshire dales and the South Island of New Zealand. I have countless happy memories to console me for his loss.