



Making Maritime History Personal

Maritime Collections and Academic Research – their Mutual Relevance

XIIth North Sea History Conference (2017)

Museum aan de Stroom (MAS), Antwerp, Wednesday 6 September – Friday 8 September 2017

The XIIth North Sea History Conference in 2017 seeks to involve maritime museum professionals and academic scholars, to generate knowledge and present new findings about the maritime culture of the North Sea region.

Researchers and academics have begun to discover more and more about the richness and scholarly potential of museum collections. The importance of material culture and built heritage, alongside written sources, is increasingly recognized in reconstructing and understanding the past. This extends not only to archaeological artefacts, but also to a wide range of different objects, from daily utensils to sophisticated constructions or *objects d'art*: all are accepted as potentially valuable to historical research. This, in turn, has stimulated collaborative research activity between researchers and museums.

In the North Sea world, academics and museum people – from the UK, the Netherlands and Denmark, for example – have already organized significant projects or launched academic programmes based on research in museum collections. The results of such teamwork have benefited both parties. Several maritime museums, especially in The Netherlands, Scandinavia and the UK, have enhanced their academic approach to collections, while universities and other academic institutions have more fully comprehended the richness and possibilities of new research in maritime history involving museum collections. In several cases, such joint ventures have resulted in maritime museums being recognized as academic institutes; and maritime museum curators, in the Netherlands and elsewhere, have been able to formally engage in academic research and higher education programmes.

Within this framework, we hope that Conference delegates will be able to address three main issues:

- How can scholars best utilise maritime collections in their research?
- How should maritime museums most effectively apply the outcomes of academic research to museum products and activities?
- How can universities participate in museums programmes to valorise their findings to the wider public?

Finally we anticipate that this symbiosis will create the opportunity to make maritime history more personal.

Conference Sessions

There will be two sessions at the Conference, each addressing one of the central themes: *The Sharing of Knowledge* and *The Value of Engaging with Artefacts*.

In the first session, *The Sharing of Knowledge*, contributors may present case studies and good practice of external knowledge successfully implemented in museum products and activities. Of course experiences of less fortunate attempts to do so are very welcome in order to tackle the problems of implementation.

For the second session, *The Value of Engaging with Artefacts*, we ask that participants present case studies and good practice in support of (or perhaps challenging) the value of engaging with maritime objects in academic research.

Venue



Museum aan de Stroom (MAS)

Hanzestedenplaats 1

2000 Antwerpen – Belgium

www.mas.be

Call for Papers

- Proposals will be evaluated by the Scientific Committee
- They have to be submitted in English, the conference language
- Only one proposal per participant will be accepted
- March 15, 2017 is the deadline for submission of the title, authors' identification (position, institution, email) and an abstract of 500 words.

Paper proposals should be sent to : jan.parmentier@stad.antwerpen.be