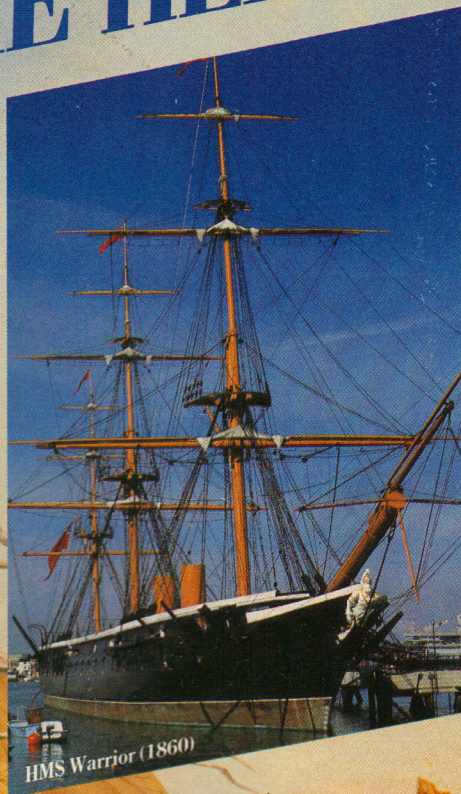


PORTSMOUTH- A WORLD CENTRE FOR MARITIME HERITAGE

Over 700 years ago King John issued the command that in Portsmouth should be established.

"A good strong well armed dock ... so that when winter comes we may avoid damage to our ships".

With these words King John laid the cornerstone for Portsmouth to become the traditional home of Britain's Royal Navy.



King Henry VII in 1496 also recognised the strategic importance of the Port when he decreed that a dry dock should be established at a spot close to where HMS Victory and the Mary Rose are now berthed.

Today the Naval Base is a world centre for Maritime Heritage and provides a fascinating living history of the ships, the men who sailed and the voyages they set sail on. The complete story is told from the Tudor War Ship, the Mary Rose preserved in the silt of the Solent for four centuries to HMS Victory, Admiral Lord Nelson's proud flagship. Following her triumphal return to her home port HMS Warrior, the giant 1860 ironclad Warship brings the story up-to-date. Berthed adjacent to the Hard at the entrance to the Naval Dockyard. HMS Warrior provides visitors with the unique opportunity to follow the development of the Warship from Tudor times through Nelson's Flagship, HMS Victory to the first "iron clads" which ultimately led to the nuclear powered warships of today.



Mary Rose, Henry Grace A Dieu and Great Vientias, in line astern departing Portsmouth with the Round Tower in the background. (From a painting by P. G. Power)



HMS Victory

board HMS Victory with her looking out to the modern visitors can sample life on an oak" Battleship. On the 40 en decks it is still possible to imagine the thoughts of the sailors as her 104 guns were locked in deadly broadside combat with the French Navy. On the Quarter Deck the spot where Nelson met the sniper's bullet is marked with a brass plaque. Below decks, the area where the fatally wounded Admiral Lord Nelson died is now a hallowed shrine to his memory.

In the shadow of Victory stands the Royal Naval Museum, the only museum in Britain devoted exclusively to the Royal Navy. Giant figureheads from long wrecked ships rub shoulders with exhibits from famous Naval Battles. In the panorama of the Battle of Trafalgar, with full sound effects, it is possible to imagine the smell of the gunpowder. The story is brought up-to-date with a mock up of a modern Leander Class Frigate and exhibits from the Falklands Campaign.

In a special dry dock workshop in Portsmouth's Naval Base, Henry VIII's favourite warship, the Mary Rose presents a breathtaking spectacle. Visitors view the hull as if it were a giant cutaway model, with the ship's structural detail exposed. Nearby, in a Georgian timber boat house, an exhibition features fascinating displays of the historical "treasures" of the ship - the every day objects she carried on a July day in 1545.

The climax of the operation to recover the Mary Rose came on October 11 1982 when the hull was raised to the surface of the Solent.

Now archaeologists are putting back many of the timbers removed during the years of underwater excavation. Visitors watch as the giant timbers are swung into position with the help of two massive cranes. Cabin partitions, deck planks and companion ways will be put back into the hull.



The Mary Rose

During the excavations, more than 50,000 artefacts were recovered representing almost every aspect of Tudor life at sea. Many of these objects are featured in the exhibition. Visitors also see re-creations of scenes of life on board the Tudor warship and interpretations of Tudor social and maritime history.

The story of the Mary Rose, her loss and her dramatic recovery is told in the exciting audio visual presentation.

