

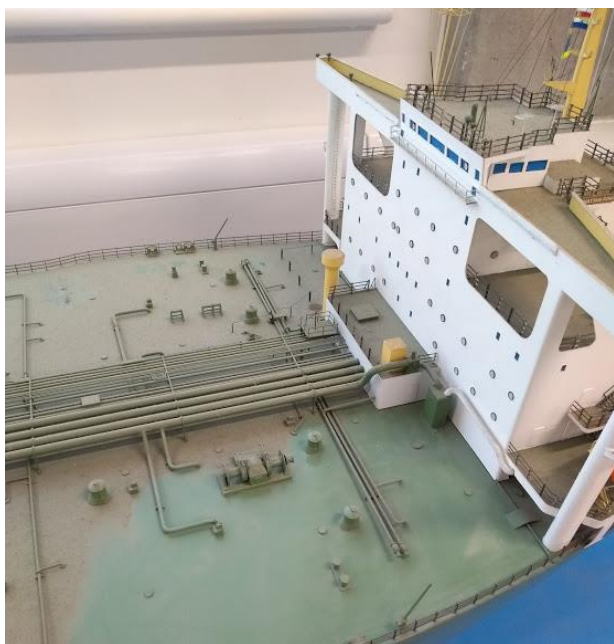
Kate Tatlow – update on Cutty Sark placement 12/06/18

Last month I had the opportunity to spend a week at the Prince Philip Maritime Collections Centre, one of the National Maritime Museum's newest facilities. A huge thank-you to conservator Karen Jensen for making my week as informative as possible and ensuring I learnt so much!

Firstly, I started working on recently acquired ship model Manhattan King, which was coated in a thick layer of dust and dirt. Using a museum vacuum and goat hair brushes, I cleaned the top layer off, using a pipette for the very small spaces under equipment on the deck. I then made tiny cotton wool swabs and using a very weak surfactant, further cleaned the model. The before and after pictures below show how satisfying (and delicate) a task this was!



Ship model Manhattan King



Left: the deck before and after vacuuming.



Right: Using cotton wool swabs to clean the model.

One of my other tasks was to help with the repackaging of a collection of donated recognition ship models, which had been used as a teaching aid to show the differences between vessels. In order to avoid the numerous protruding fragile elements (such as masts/yards) on these models from being damaged in storage/movement or handling, more appropriate bespoke packaging needed to be made. This involved separating the ships with plastazote foam strips on a foam base and making stoppers for the bow and stern of each model to ensure they could not move out of place.



Left: Glueing plastazote foam to make stoppers for each end of the models.

While working with the main museum conservation volunteers, I helped with light object cleaning in the Royal Observatory and galleries of the National Maritime Museum, including frames and ships badges. I was also given the opportunity to help clean the large, full-rigged ship model of the HMS Cornwallis which is on show in the museum's All Hands gallery. Being a very complex model in a small space, accessibility was a challenge and great care needed when moving around, one small wayward movement can snag the rigging!



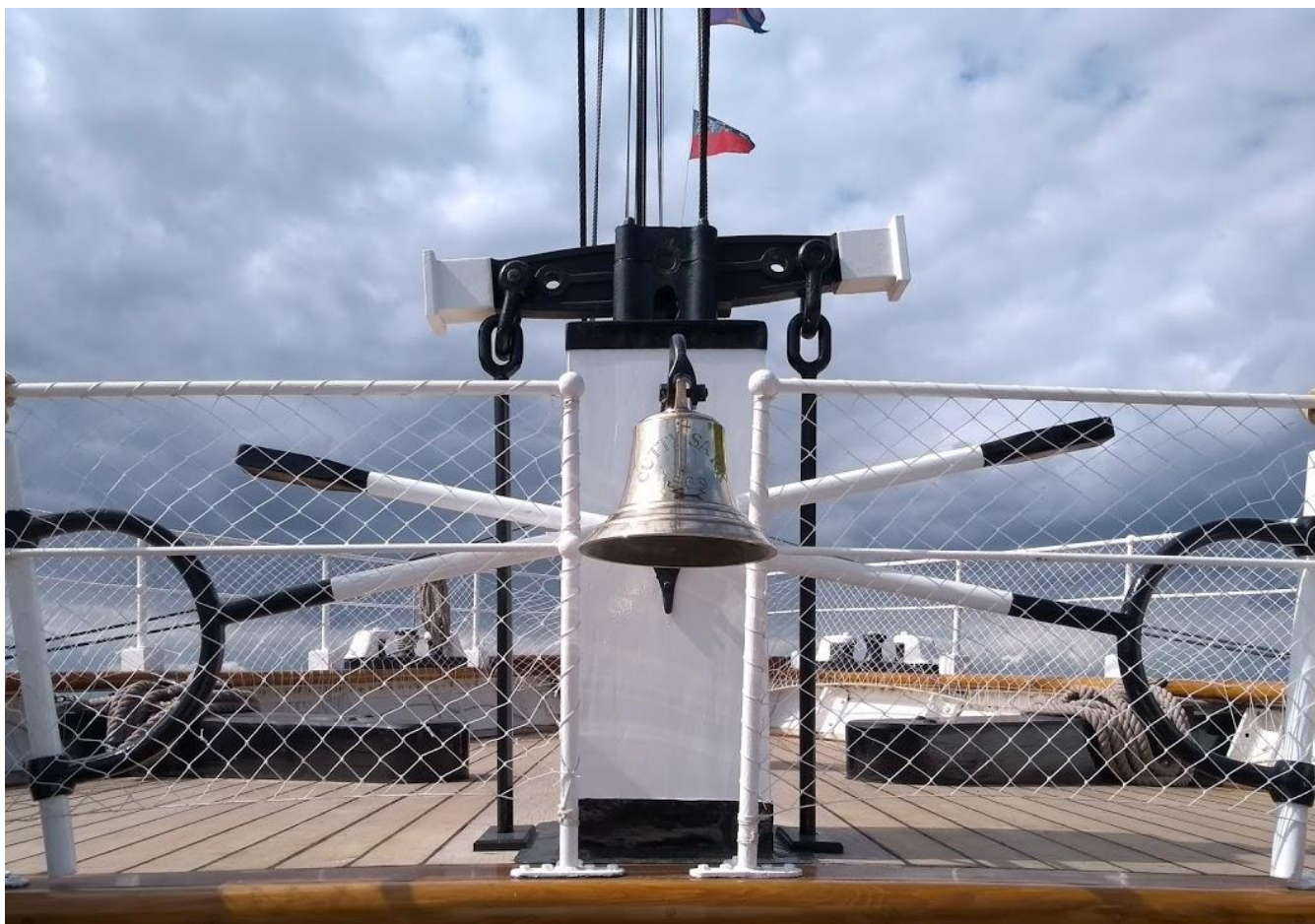
Far left: Cleaning ships badges.



Near left: The deck of the HMS Cornwallis model during cleaning. The nearer portion of the deck has been cleaned and further part is still to be done.



On the Cutty Sark itself, the monkey fo'c'sle deck has been reopened to the public after a final coat of paint in the heads, the addition of safety netting and replacement of the ship's bell. I helped with the replacement of the starboard side decorative carving which fits upon the end of the ship's cats heads (which stop the anchors from resting on the side of the ship).



Above: The reopened monkey fo'c'sle deck with newly laid deck.

Left: Carving ready to be replaced on the end of the starboard cat-head.