

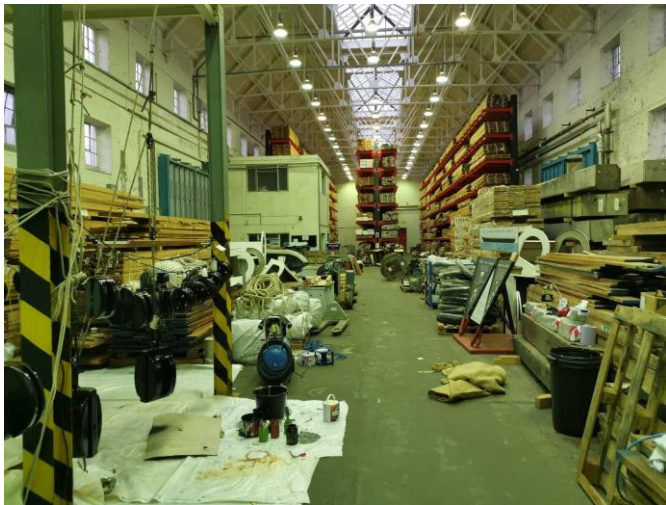
Meshellae Payne - January Blog Post

The National Museum of the Royal Navy

## Rigging *Warrior*



On the 6<sup>th</sup> January I arrived at The National Museum of the Royal Navy slightly nervous but mostly excited to get started. As my nervousness began to dissipate with time, as I toured around the Heritage Teams facilities, and my excitement only grew..



The shipwrights and riggers are based inside an expansive workshop which used to be a ropery (this explains the ridiculously long and high bays that make up the workshop. It is hard not to be impressed when walking through the facility, especially when one heads into Bays 2 and 3, where the wood and rope are stored.

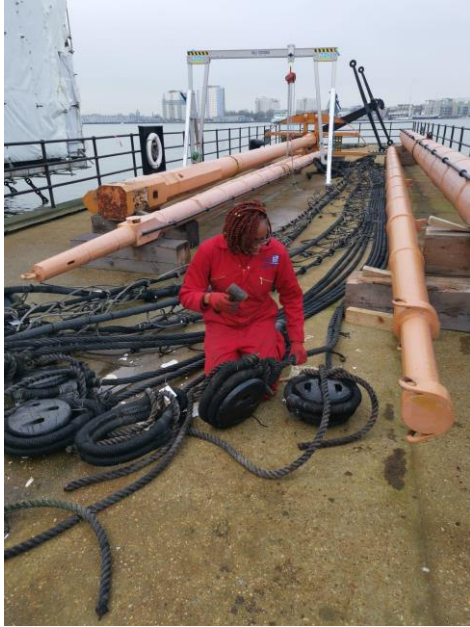
Although the initial plan was for me to start off working with the shipwrights, they were busy finishing working on the stern of HMS *Warrior* and there wasn't much for me to work on with them, so instead I began my placement working with the Riggers.

It seemed that I had come at a perfect time as they were tackling a massive project taking down HMS *Warrior*'s mizzen mast and creating new rigging for it.

The first thing I got taught was how to do seizings for the rigging eyes that would be housing the deadeyes, which are wooden discs with three holes through that the standing or running rigging for a sailing ship will run through. The point of the seizings are to ensure that the tension in the eye is held, keeping the deadeye tightly in place and preventing everything from completely falling apart and thus endangering anyone on deck.

Since I joined the project when the riggers were busy taking down all the rigging for the mizzen mast, I sadly didn't get a chance to climb the rigging. Hopefully I will be able to spend some time with them in the summer and get a chance then! Instead I helped take down the rigging





by cutting through the existing seizings with a hot knife to begin freeing the huge deadeyes that hold the ratlans in place. These were then lifted from *Warrior* onto the dock using a crane, allowing us to more easily remove the ropes from the deadeyes and roll them all up for storage.

It was weird to see the mizzen mast after all our efforts were complete, stripped down and bare, as it will stay until the new tops platform and rigging are finished being made.





During my time with the riggers I got to try my hand at a variety of tasks, from seizing to serving (which I particularly enjoyed), to powerwashing spars and painting seizings to delay their degradation. I really enjoyed my time with them, but it's time to move on to the shipwrights, where I'll get to learn how they plan to build the new tops platform for *Warrior's* mizzen mast!

