



PRESS RELEASE

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THIS WORKING LIFE: TALES FROM THE SHIPYARD

The BFI announces the second instalment of its **This Working Life** project: **Tales from the Shipyard**, launching in February 2011. The project is a major celebration of our shipbuilding heritage on screen with many rare films drawn from the BFI National Archive, Scottish Screen Archive and Northern Region Film & Television Archive and includes a BFI Southbank season, national tour and new DVD.

This Working Life: Tales from the Shipyard will be shown in cinemas at BFI Southbank, Newcastle's Tyneside Cinema, Glasgow Film Theatre and Belfast's Queen's Film Theatre, presenting newly restored feature films, non-fiction and television material - all captured by filmmakers across a century.

A double disc DVD will feature over five hours of documentary film revealing the history of British shipbuilding with many rare and little known titles. A supporting free programme will be available in the BFI Mediatheques in London, Cambridge, Derby, Wrexham and Newcastle and there will be online study resources in www.screenonline.org.uk

One of the highlights of the programme is the only film ever directed by Sean Connery, a rare discovery entitled *The Bowler and the Bunnett* (1967) made for Scottish Television.

Sir Sean Connery said "I am very pleased that *The Bowler and The Bunnet* will be screened as part of the *Tales From The Shipyard* season. I spent a month making the film and was inspired by the common sense attempts being made to revolutionise working practices - all ultimately with the goal of making a great industry succeed in Scotland. Although it was made in the 60's there are lasting themes to be found in it."

Other highlights include the stunning *S.S. Olympic* (1910) showing the building and launch of the Titanic's sister ship in Belfast and beautiful colour footage of the iconic *Queen Mary Leaving the Clyde* (1936) newly restored by the Scottish Screen Archive. Michael Powell's fiction feature *Red Ensign* (1934) is a drama of shipboard industrial relations neatly paralleled by Sean Connery's only film as director, *The Bowler and the Bunnet* (1967) a meditation on shipbuilding and the role of the

unions and Bill Bryden's extraordinary theatrical celebration of shipbuilding *The Ship* (1990).

The BFI's This Working Life project began last year with **King Coal**, an exploration of the rich collections of films relating to the coal industry; the final instalment in 2012 will focus on the steel industry. What each part of the project has in common is a real sense of re-discovery of films which document the culture and heritage of our all-but-vanished major national industries.

Full draft cinema programme February 2011:

Tales from the Shipyard: A Century of Shipbuilding on Screen

We celebrate a century of shipbuilding on film with a selection of films ranging from the stunning *S.S. Olympic* (1910) showing the building and launch of the Titanic's sister ship in Belfast to beautiful colour footage of the iconic *Queen Mary Leaving the Clyde* (1936) newly restored by the Scottish Screen Archive. Also featuring Paul Rotha's modernist classic *Shipyard* (1935) filmed at Barrow in Furness, capturing the building of a liner with the eye of a painter, and the stunning, Oscar-winning documentary celebrating Scotland's shipping industry, *Seawards the Great Ships* (1960, Dir Hilary Harris). Amber Films' impressionistic *Launch* (1974, extract) vividly captures differing perspectives of a VIP launch on Tyneside; and Sean Connery startles with his stylish and opinionated *The Bowler and the Bunnet* (STV 1967, extract) about the prospects for the Govan shipyards.

Red Ensign

UK1934 Dir. Michael Powell. With Leslie Banks, Carol Goodner, John Laurie. 69min

This early feature by Michael Powell is a stirring, melodramatic tale of romance and labour relations on Clydeside. The glorious photography by Leslie Rowson includes epic shots of men at work in the shipyards. Starring David Barr as the wonderfully domineering managing director of a shipbuilding company and June MacKinnon as his strongwilled love interest. Plus *The Building of a Liner* (1938, 10min) a gorgeous documentary encompassing dramatic scenes at steelworks and crowds of men streaming to the shipyard through streets strung with washing. Introduction by an Archive curator.

The Shipbuilders (1943)

UK 1943 Dir. John Baxter. With Clive Brook, Morland Graham, Nell Ballantyne. 89min

In this Clydeside drama, intimate family scenes convey a vivid sense of the living and working conditions of shipyard communities spanning the 1930s and World War II. Lively performances, particularly from Nell Ballantyne as the longsuffering Mrs Shields. The idealised view of relations between boss and worker, contrasts sharply with *Red Ensign*. Plus *The Little Ships of England* (1943, 13min), a patriotic and picturesque documentary on the building of various types of small craft in SW England to support the war effort.

Introduction by an Archive curator.

The Ship (BBC 1990) 100 min

Dir Bill Bryden, Derek Bailey.

This powerful television version of Bill Bryden's spectacular theatre production *The Ship*, portrays the pride, resilience, wit, hardships and humour of shipbuilding communities on the Clyde. It was staged - and filmed - in Harland & Wolff's former engine shed in Govan and culminated each night in a remarkable recreation of a launch - an astounding coup de theatre! Both screenings to be introduced by director, Bill Bryden.

Seawards the Great Ships

Sean Connery directs and presents a startling, stylish and wry look at the shipyards of Govan, *The Bowler and the Bunnet* (STV 1967, 36min). The stunning Oscar-winning documentary *Seawards the Great Ships* (1960, 29min) celebrates Scotland's role as shipbuilder to the world; there's glorious colour footage of the *Queen Mary Leaving the Clyde* (1936, 2min) - before she was painted grey - newly restored by the Scottish Screen Archive; plus the friendly story of a family firm of propellor manufacturers, *Men of Iron* (c.1947, 18min).

Tyneside Tales

Visual delights spanning the Tyne and Wear include the gloriously photographed *Tyneside* (1941) focussing on the building of the Dominion Monarch. There's drama in *Forward to Service* (c.1948), in which shipbuilding offers salvation to two young stowaways, featuring the voice of Wilfred Pickles. *Sunderland Oak* (BBC 1961, Dir Philip Donnellan, 30min) beautifully combines songs, workers' voices and evocative imagery. Amber Films' impressionistic *Launch* (1974, Dirs Murray Martin & Peter Roberts, 10min) features VIPs and workers and their different experiences of the big day of a launch at Swan Hunters, Wallsend.

A Ship is Born in Belfast

Rare and breathtaking film of the *SS Olympic* (UK 1910, 7min), the sister ship of the Titanic -and there is no equivalent footage of the Titanic - launches this programme of Belfast shipbuilding. *A Great Ship* (UK1962, Dir John Reeve, 31min), newly restored, shows the construction of the liner *Canberra*, conveying an awe-inspiring sense of the worldwide community of workers contributing to the ship's birth. *The Steel Chest, Nail in the Boot and the Barking Dog* (RTE, 1986. Dir. David Hammond, 52 min) is an award-winning documentary largely told in story and song by the families that made their livings in the shipyard.

Tales from the Shipyard – Britain's Shipbuilding Heritage on Film DVD draft programme summary

NB: FILMS ON THIS PROGRAMME MAY BE SUBJECT TO CHANGE DUE TO LICENSING, AVAILABLE MATERIAL, OR OTHER CONSIDERATIONS.

PLEASE CHECK WITH PRESS OFFICE FOR CONFIRMED DETAILS BEFORE PUBLICATION.

The Launch of HMS Albion at Blackwall (aka **The Launch of a Ship**) (E P Prestwich, 1898)

1 min

The launch at Thames Iron Works on the River Lea, which (unlike R W Paul's version) is shot from a high angle which shows the whole of the battleship coming down the slipway and entering the water. At this launch, the ship (or the wash that it caused) hit a pontoon holding spectators; a number of people drowned.

Employees Leaving Messrs Vickers and Maxims in Barrow (Mitchell & Kenyon, 1901)

1 min 30 sec

A good example of the 'factory gate' genre of the turn of the century: a static camera shows a large group of men leaving the factory. A small group of boys fools in front of the camera throughout, whilst one or two young girls are seen in the crowd.

Workforce of Scott & Co Shipyard, Greenock (Mitchell & Kenyon, 1901)

2 mins 13 sec

In another nice 'factory gate' film, a well-dressed man (probably an M&K employee) is seen directing the crowds to look to the camera. In a second shot, a group of the young workers, and small boys and girls, wave to the camera.

Launch of Dominion (Mitchell & Kenyon, 1903)

1 min 37 sec

Following a shot of open water with small sailing yachts and a two-funnelled ship (possibly the tug boat), *Dominion* slides into view, and the chains, and wreckage of the wooden scaffold, can be seen, as can the crew on the deck.

King Edward VII Launches H M S Dreadnought from Portsmouth (1906)

2 mins 12 secs

Representing a significant moment in the escalation of naval power against Germany, King Edward VII performs the ceremony of breaking a bottle against the hull. The battleship goes down the slipway – a second shot repeats the launch run from a different angle, before the slipway is overrun by jubilant workmen.

S S Olympic (1910)

7 mins approx

A beautiful film in which the scale, size and beauty of the White Star liner is made apparent. This film charts the building and launch of the Olympic at the Harland & Wolf shipyards in Belfast, showing the drawing office, the dry dock, cranes in operation, and the launch of the ship. The Olympic was the Titanic's sister-ship, built in the neighbouring berth (there is no equivalent footage of the Titanic).

Launch of H M S Lowestoft (Topical Budget, 1913)

2 mins

The latest addition to 'Britain's first line of defence' is successfully launched by Lady Beauchamp at Chatham Dockyard. The cruiser goes down causeway, away from the camera, and cheering workman obscure the view before turning and realising the camera's behind them, pulling each other out of the way.

Visit of Their Majesties the King and Queen to the North-East Coast Shipbuilding and Engineering Works on the Wear (1917)

12 mins 36 sec

King George V and Queen Mary visit shipyards on the Wear in Sunderland, the King in his naval uniform. Most of the workers are in their regular work clothes, so clearly the visit was to be as informal as possible. We can assume that it was a morale booster for the exhausted shipyard workers during the Great War.

RMS Queen Mary Leaves the Clyde (1936)

Scottish Screen Archive restoration

1 min

A rare colour film of RMS Queen Mary leaving the Clyde on 25 March 1936, on her maiden voyage to New York, shot from the south bank of the river, possibly around Erskine. Although she was launched in 1934, it took a further two years to fit out this Cunard White Star Liner. Not long after this, the ship was painted grey and used as a troop ship during the War.

Shipyard (Paul Rotha, 1935)

24 mins

The building of the S S Orion at Barrow-in-Furness. The ship is finally launched by the Duke of Gloucester by radio from Australia. A sophisticated and beautifully-shot documentary from a leading light in the British documentary movement, with elements of Soviet-style editing and impressionistic layered audio.

Chains (1939)

10 mins

The making of wrought iron chains, links and anchors by hand, by craftsmen at the Netherton works of N Hingley and Sons Ltd. The full process is shown and the skill and strength of the large numbers of craftsmen is apparent.

Tyneside (1941)

18 mins

A survey of shipbuilding on Tyneside. Grand metaphors are mobilised in the voiceover, accompanying gorgeous tracking and crane shots, large and expansive, with great shots from beneath the hull. The film ends with shots of the luxurious 'life' on board a liner.

Steel Goes to Sea (John E Lewis, 1941)

16 mins

Showing each stage in the construction of a ship, and emphasising the particular importance of the traditional skills of British shipbuilders. A young apprentice is seen, and passing reference made to home guard protecting the shipyard during the

night. This is a really nice film and the presence of the young apprentice graffiti-ing "Hitler is a b***" raises a smile. The film fully shows the notion of a ship as initially simply a number, 'coming to life'.

The Little Ships of England (1943)

13 mins

In contrast to many of the other films on this programme, this film examines the building of various small types of craft, looking at wooden-built, smaller boats, drawing on older craftsmanship. There is a sense of localised seaside community life. The film makes reference to small boats rescuing men at Dunkirk, using dramatised sequences. Nicely composed shots (great use of shadows) with an uplifting tone.

Shipyard for Colliers (from Mining Review 2nd year No 3) (1948)

2 mins – single story

Another film looking at smaller ships, rather than big liners, in a story filmed at Sunderland's Wear Dockyard of S. P. Austin, on 'Shipyard No. 397' M.V. Auk. She was being built for the General Steam Navigation Company of London. Colliers are built at this yard for the coal trade around the coast of Britain. It makes the explicit link between the industries: "Coal made them, to work for coal".

Berth 24 (R B Holmes, 1950)

40 mins

This is the first production of the newly formed British Transport Film Unit. Set in the Hull Docks, it describes the 'turn around' of the steamer S S Bravo, following her arrival from Gothenburg with various cargoes and then loading and departing again for Sweden. Incorporating poetry and music, whilst not strictly about shipbuilding, this is about the life of a shipyard within the dynamics of Britain's economy. An entertaining, watchable film.

We've Come a Long Way (1951)

11 mins

Animation – the story of the development of techniques for constructing ever-larger oil tankers over the last 100 yrs. A lively animation style uses simple pictures to show engineering challenges, contrasting nicely with the actuality films that we have on the programme. It also links the building of tankers to the operation of ships in a global market.

The Sea Shall Test Her (Jack Howells, 1954)

18 mins

A poetic, discursive film about the wonders of ships (so wider than just shipbuilding, showing also steelworkers, for instance), but centred around the building of the liner The Southern Cross. Music by Edward Williams.

Seawards the Great Ships (Hilary Harris, 1960)

Scottish Screen Archive restoration

29 mins

Oscar-winning documentary about shipbuilding on the Clyde, based on an original outline by the 'father' of British documentary John Grierson. The film shows the planning, the workshops, the steelworks, and gives a lovely sense of the beauty of a very large ship and intimacy of the work involved in building her.

A Great Ship (John Reeve, 1962)

The construction of the liner Canberra, an Australian passenger ship, in Belfast. The film gives a great sense of the huge numbers of people involved, and is shot through with a sense of drama, humour, and community.

The Bowler and the Bunnet (Sean Connery, 1967)

36 mins

Sean Connery goes around Glasgow, commenting on the role and importance of the industry to the city's community and life, and visiting Fairfields Shipyard where a new model of agreements between staff and management is being trialed to

prevent industrial action and help the shipyard compete in the global market. Connery is seen visiting abandoned docks, playing football with staff. Crisply shot, with a wry and entertaining voiceover, and a 60s mood and style. Most importantly, the film conveys a sense of the industrial crisis and the importance of intelligent resolutions.

UCS 1 (1971)

20 mins

The campaign film used by the Upper Clyde shipyard workers (Upper Clyde Shipbuilders Ltd) when they took action to protect their jobs and keep the shipyard open. The film shows the mass protest they initiated, how they took their cause to the wider community and records some of the thoughts and feelings of the men and women involved in the work-in, the demonstrations and meetings. Appearing in the film are Jimmy Reid, John Airlie and Archie Hind. This is a key part of the story of the campaign, which was (temporarily) successful.

Launch (1974)

10 mins

A beautiful, impressionistic view of the activities over the day before, and on the day of, the launch of a large ship built at the Swan Hunter's Wallsend shipyard. Without commentary or voiceover, the sense of occasion is built through views and impressions of the shipyard and surrounding community, as the launch-time draws nearer.

The DVD set is completed by an illustrated booklet of new essays and notes.

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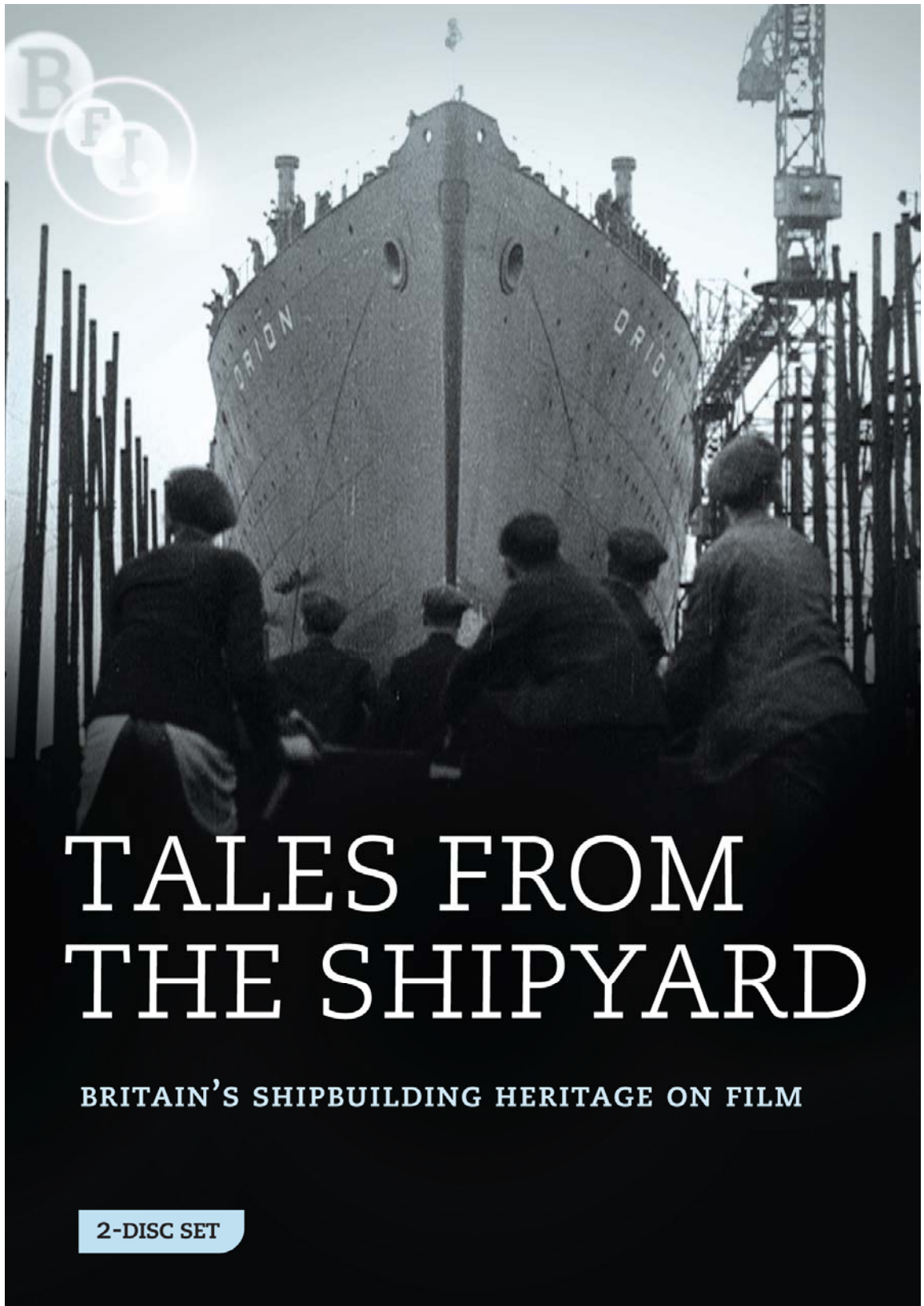
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About the BFI

The BFI is the nation's cultural organisation for film, keeping the breadth of voices in moving image culture alive and known. Through its venues, festivals, film releases and online, the BFI inspires people to understand and enjoy film culture, ensuring that everyone in the UK can see the broadest range and choice of films, otherwise not provided by commercial cinema. The BFI reaches an audience of over 7.5 million in the UK every year.

The BFI is a public body part funded by DCMS through the UK Film Council. For every £1 it receives in grant-in-aid, the BFI raises a further £1.50 through self-generated means.

www.bfi.org.uk



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BRITAIN'S SHIPBUILDING HERITAGE ON FILM

2-DISC SET