



The Life, Times, and Heritage Futures of the *Gloucester*

Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery

12–13 May 2023

Following the announcement in 2022 of the discovery of the *Gloucester* shipwreck, this international and interdisciplinary conference presents new research about the warship for the first time. Experts on maritime, naval, political, and cultural history, together with divers, archaeologists, and museum and gallery professionals, will reveal their findings to date and explore the possible heritage futures for this extraordinary seventeenth-century ship.

A major exhibition ‘The Last Voyage of the *Gloucester*: Norfolk’s Royal Shipwreck, 1682’ runs at Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery from 25 February 2023 to 10 September 2023, the result of a partnership between the finders the Barnwell brothers, Norfolk Museums Service, and academic partner UEA.

The conference will put the artefacts rescued from the wreck site in dialogue with research insights about their significance, in order to tell the stories of the warship and all those whose lives were affected by the tragedy on 6 May 1682.



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Friday 12 May 2023 - Session 1

The Warship *Gloucester*: Past, Present, and Futures – Roundtable Panel with the *Gloucester* Project Team

The Town Close Auditorium

2.15pm – 4.45pm

Chairs: Professor Sarah Barrow, Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Arts and Humanities at UEA and Steve Miller, Director of Culture and Heritage and Head of Norfolk Museums Service

- Julian Barnwell, representing the divers who discovered the wreck
- General Lord Richard Dannatt, Chairman of the 1682 Trust established to protect the wreck
- Professor Claire Jowitt, Director, The *Gloucester* Project, UEA
- Garry Momber, Director, Maritime Archaeological Trust
- Dr Benjamin Redding, Senior Research Associate, The *Gloucester* Project, UEA
- Ruth Battersby Tooke, Senior Curator, Costume and Textiles, Norfolk Museums Service
- Dr Francesca Vanke, Senior Curator and Keeper of Fine and Decorative Art, Norfolk Museums Service



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Friday 12 May 2023 - Session 2

**Private View and Curator-led Guided Tour of the Exhibition
'The Last Voyage of the *Gloucester*: Norfolk's Royal
Shipwreck, 1682' and Drinks Reception**

Exhibition Galleries and the Rotunda

5pm – 6.30pm



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Saturday 13 May 2023 - Session 3

History Matters: the *Gloucester* in Context: Seventeenth-Century British Domestic and Foreign Policy

The Town Close Auditorium

9.30am –11am

Chair: Professor Claire Jowitt, Director, The *Gloucester* Project, UEA

Professor Mark Knights, Department of History, University of Warwick

‘The Political Context of the *Gloucester*: the Succession Crisis and Corruption’

The paper covers the succession crisis of 1678–82 and its aftermath; key figures involved in the shipwreck; the politics of the wreck; and corruption, particularly naval corruption, in the period before and after the sinking. The paper will show that this was no ordinary shipwreck, but one charged with political importance, given that it was carrying James, Duke of York, the controversial, Catholic heir to the throne, whose right to succeed his brother Charles II had been the subject of an intense political crisis that brought the nation to the edge of civil war. Equally controversial was what some feared to be a drift towards a corrupted political system (thanks to the policies pursued by the Earl of Danby in the 1670s) and corruption in the navy, something that became even more obvious in the decade or so after the wreck. The paper will illustrate the theme of naval corruption with reference to Samuel Pepys and whistle-blowers in the 1690s.

Professor Steven Pincus, Thomas E. Donnelly Professor of British History,
Department of History, University of Chicago

‘The Imperial Crisis of the 1670s and 1680s’

Until recently imperial issues have been underplayed in the historiography of Restoration Britain. In fact, the period of the so-called Exclusion Crisis was part



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and parcel of a broader imperial crisis. In Massachusetts, Virginia, Bombay, Tangier, and Jamaica, Charles II's Restoration Empire came under threat. While scholars working on each region have drawn attention to the local causes and consequences, I ask instead what tied these crises together? My hypothesis is that Charles II's new fiscal strategy that required doing empire on the cheap, led in all these cases to bringing local tensions to boiling point. In all these places – with the exception of Tangier – Charles II and then James II succeeded in tightening imperial control. Tangier proved the exception precisely because it was the one location which required Parliamentary support to sustain it as a colony. It was only after 1688 that royal empire came to an end, to be replaced by a new kind of state empire.



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Saturday 13 May 2023 - Session 4

British Political Contexts and the *Gloucester* in Focus

The Town Close Auditorium

11.30am – 1pm

Chair: Professor Bernard Capp, Department of History, University of Warwick

Professor Karin Bowie, History, University of Glasgow

'The *Gloucester* Disaster and the Royalist Regime of James, Duke of Albany, in Scotland'

When the *Gloucester* sank James, Duke of Albany and High Commissioner to the 1681 Scottish Parliament, was on his way back to Edinburgh after a brief visit to his brother Charles II. James had resided in Scotland for most of the period from November 1679 to March 1682 while English Whigs sought to ensure that the Catholic duke would not succeed to his brother's throne in England. Arriving in Scotland after a Presbyterian rising that forced out from power John Maitland, Duke of Lauderdale, and Scotland's long-time Secretary, James became the king's man in Scotland. The passengers with him on the *Gloucester* show that he surrounded himself with staunch Royalists. In the shipwreck, James saved a strongbox with royal papers outlining a reshuffle of the Scottish government and secured a place in his longboat for George Gordon of Haddo, the new Chancellor. This 1682 government proceeded to oversee what the Presbyterians dubbed 'the Killing Times', doubling down on a firm approach to religious dissent and political resistance encouraged by James during his time in Scotland. He also cultivated expressions of what the Privy Council called a 'sense of duty and ancient alledgeance' to encourage loyalism in England. This paper examines printed pamphlets and street politics in Scotland demonstrating competing concerns for the Protestant religion and the Stewart monarchy that help to explain how Scotland tipped from loyalty to revolution between 1685 and 1688.



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Dr Benjamin Redding, Senior Research Associate, The *Gloucester* Project, UEA

‘Survival After Solebay: the *Gloucester* in 1672’

Professor Claire Jowitt, Director, The *Gloucester* Project, UEA

‘Salvage Stories: Early Recovery Attempts on the *Gloucester* Wreck’

These two short papers by Project team members each focus on a particular aspect of the *Gloucester’s* history from across its career.



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The Material and Cultural Ship: Ship Design and Musical Cultures

The Town Close Auditorium

2pm – 3.30pm

Chair: Professor Bernard Capp, Department of History, University of Warwick

Richard Endsor, Independent Scholar

'The Structure and Particular Repairs Carried Out on the *Gloucester*'

Ships such as the *Gloucester* were made up of thousands of individual pieces of timber put together in such a precise and ordered manner that they were strong enough to fight battles and sail the world. Their structures were highly stressed and as the timbers became weakened through age, damage, or decay they required constant repair and maintenance. This paper begins by explaining the fundamentals of ship construction and the work necessary to keep vessels at sea. My attention then focuses on the shipwright's written reports of the actual timbers removed and replaced by the shipwrights to make the ageing *Gloucester* a ship of choice to take James Stuart, the heir to the throne, on a voyage to Scotland.

Professor Rebecca Herissone, Department of Music, University of Manchester

'These were at Sea' A Glimpse of the Life of the Restoration Court Musician through the Porthole'

At the accession of James II and VII in 1685, more than three years after the sinking of the *Gloucester*, the Lord Chamberlain drew up a list of the musicians to be appointed to the new king's Private Music ensemble. It began with six names marked within the annotation 'These were at sea', the last two of whom were evidently the sons of two of the fatalities in May 1682, appointed to their places with the note 'his father drowned at sea'. Excavating the wreck



of the *Gloucester* might uncover evidence of the substantial material losses that they suffered. But the names on the 1685 list also provide a glimpse into the world of the Restoration court musician. They reveal how James used tobacco and sugar taxes to conceal his employment of foreign Catholic musicians in the post Popish-Plot era. They also show how these foreigners revolutionised instrumentation in English music of the period, and the resulting creation of an itinerant band of exceptionally versatile multi-instrumentalists who specialised in accompanying the royal household on its summer progresses around the country, a role that appears to have cost some of them their lives on that fateful morning in 1682.



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Shipwrecks in Context: Museum Futures

The Town Close Auditorium

4pm – 5.30pm

Chair: Garry Momber, Director, Maritime Archaeological Trust

Dr Alexzandra Hildred, Director of Research, *Mary Rose* Trust and Dr Fred Hocker, Director of Research, *Vasa* Museum

‘Bringing a Shipwreck to the Public: “Here’s one I made earlier”’

The recent discovery of the *Gloucester* wreck off Great Yarmouth raises intriguing questions about whether a new maritime museum should be developed to display and share this nationally and internationally important heritage asset. There are numerous pitfalls and challenges when considering how to, or whether to, create a new museum in and for the twenty-first century. Where should it be located? Which audiences should it engage? Will it be economically viable? Is this particular shipwreck significant enough to sustain interest and visitor numbers over many years?

These are just some of the questions that those considering creating a new maritime museum must consider. In this session the future of the *Gloucester* wreck will be placed in wider contexts of early modern shipwreck museums. From their own experiences, Alexzandra Hildred, Director of Research at the *Mary Rose* Museum, and Fred Hocker, Director of Research at the *Vasa* Museum, will explore the issues and opportunities in recovering, preserving, and presenting the artefacts and structural remains of the ship. They will share their experiences of developing iconic and enduring maritime museums which successfully combine scientific and historical research with conservation over the last forty years.



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