



The Friends of Martello24 is a Registered Charity No.1172376

Welcome to this, the first issue of our Newsletter about Martello Tower No.24 in Dymchurch, aiming to keep you up to date with what is happening at this unique Martello Tower. The Friends of Martello 24 work in partnership with English Heritage, who own the tower, to ensure that the tower is open to the public on a regular basis.

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Martello24 Tower Repair Works

Firm plans for repair work and some re-decoration to Martello24 have been produced by English Heritage and have been put out for contract. The work needs to be done in the warmer weather and is currently planned to be undertaken May to July 2019. It is likely scaffolding will need to be erected, in which case it is very probable that the tower will not be open to the public during this time.

To enable us to open as much as possible in 2019, we have agreed with EH to re-start the public openings from Saturday 6 April 2019. The tower will then need to be closed to the public to allow the proposed repair works, likely to be undertaken in May, June & some of July 2019, aiming to re-open mid-July ready for the school holidays. There may be scope to open for some days during this period.

Bespoke Visits for Groups

During the closed period 29 October 2018 to 6 April 2019, bespoke visits by appointment are available for recognised groups eg History Societies, WI Schools, Scouts & Girl Guides etc comprising of more than 10 people.

If any group would like a visit, please contact the Secretary Peter, email peter@martello24.net or telephone 01797 212507.

Martello Tower 24 Display Committee

We have a sub-committee comprising three of the Trustees, who are looking into how we can improve the displays inside the tower once the ingress of water problem has been solved. They are looking into providing food in cellar, range in fireplace, oil walls, electronic projection in cellar, muskets, weather proofed display board for roof showing cannon with ropes and pulleys, manikin with uniform, examples of charges for cannon.

FoM24 are pleased to tell you that we have received a grant of £1,070 from F&HDC for the purchase of 5 replica muskets and storage box for display inside Martello Tower 24. Many thanks to Cllr Ian Meyers for his continued support.

Become a Volunteer Steward

We are in need of more volunteer Stewards to help with manning the tower when we open it to the public. If you are interested in the tower and are happy to meet and greet visitors, then please contact the Secretary, Peter email peter@martello24.net or telephone 01797 212507.

Greeting Cards and Postcards

We have two postcards and two greetings cards (*pictured right*) which are available for sale as mementos and to help with our fundraising.

The greetings cards are prints from two donated original water colour paintings; one of a tower on the coast, and the second specifically of Martello24. They are priced at £2.00 each.

The two postcards are photos of the tower and are priced at 60p each.

They are all available from the Arcade Gift Shop in Dymchurch or from Peter.



Cinque Ports Volunteers

The Cinque Ports Volunteers re-enactment group attended 'for duty' for several days during 2018 and we are very appreciative of their attendance and help. The public enjoyed seeing "soldiers on duty" and their knowledge of the Napoleonic period has been a great help to our Stewards when dealing with questions from the public.



Cinque Port Volunteers on duty at the cannon
From left to right
Private - Blue Uniform
Officer - Major
Sailor - Sea Fencibles

You can find out more about the Cinque Ports Volunteers at <https://theromneymarsh.net/cinqueportsvolunteers>

Other Martello Towers

Martello Towers Nos 6 and 7

Located in Sandgate, it was reported in September 2018 that new owners had plans for Martello Tower No.6 to become a holiday home and Martello Tower No. 7 to become a permanent residence.

Martello Tower No.25

Planning application submitted in November 2018 for works to the Martello Tower to include division into four storeys with a spiral staircase together with glazed panels to the fourth floor around the perimeter and installation of a new roof. In addition, two new window openings are proposed to the third floor in association with the change of use to a holiday let.

Quiz

A small prize for the first five correct answers to Peter.

1. Who made the cannon and when?
 2. Why were Towers 24 and 25 sited where they are?
 3. What are the three ingredients that were mixed to make the very strong mortar used to bind the bricks together?
 4. What type of muskets would have been used?
 5. What is the largest Martello Tower in England?
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Future Newsletters

If you would like to receive future copies of our Newsletters, please email Peter your email address at peter@martello24.net.

Your email address will only be used to send you our Newsletters and other information about Martello Towers. We will never give or sell your information to any third parties.

If you have received this Newsletter by email and do not wish to receive future copies, please email Peter peter@martello24.net

Contact

You can contact the secretary of the FoM24, Peter, by email peter@martello24.net and/or telephone 01797 212507.

History of the Tower – Coast Blockade Service

Once Napoleon had been defeated at Waterloo in 1815, the need for Martello Towers for military use decreased significantly and other uses were found for them. From about 1816 to 1831 they were used by the then new Coast Blockade Service.

The Coast Blockade Service was created in 1816 following the country's huge loss of revenue due to what was then considered by some to be a lack of success by the Customs and Revenue Services in coping with the smuggling problem.

At the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, Captain Joseph MacCulloch proposed the creation of a unified service to guard the coast of Kent where he was at that time commander of a Royal Navy ship supporting the Revenue Service. He proposed that the shore patrols, the in-shore water patrol and the off-shore cruiser activity should all be united under a single command. So in 1816, the Coast Blockade Service was created under MacCulloch's command on the Kent coastline between North Foreland and Dungeness. This proved to be highly successful but not popular.

By 1820 there were 6708 officers and men, including 2,375 men on 31 Royal Navy ships, operating at a total cost of just under £521,000. There was considerable scope for confusion and duplication because of the fragmented approach. In 1821 a committee examining the operation of the Customs recommended the combination of all services (except the Coast Blockade which would remain under the Admiralty) under the control of the Board of Customs.

When the Martello Towers were occupied by the Coast Blockade Service, a typical Blockade party in a tower was one officer, two petty officers and eight to ten men. In some instances the petty officers and men had their wives with them in the towers. The towers were divided into three areas, for the Officer, men's quarters and stores, as they were previously when used by the military.

The Coastguard Service came into operation in 1822. In 1831, the Coast Blockade was absorbed into this new service. Coastguards served on ships and on shore. Men on shore were moved away from their home location for fear of collusion. Coastguard Stations were equipped with living quarters for married men as well as single quarters. Each station was commanded by a Chief Officer (normally a Royal Navy lieutenant). Beneath him were Chief Boatman, Commissioned Boatman and Boatman ranks. The size of the station determined the number of each rank. By 1839 there were over 4,553 Coastguards.

*For more information about the Coast Blockade Service,
please see the book
'The Coast Blockade' by Roy Philp*

