

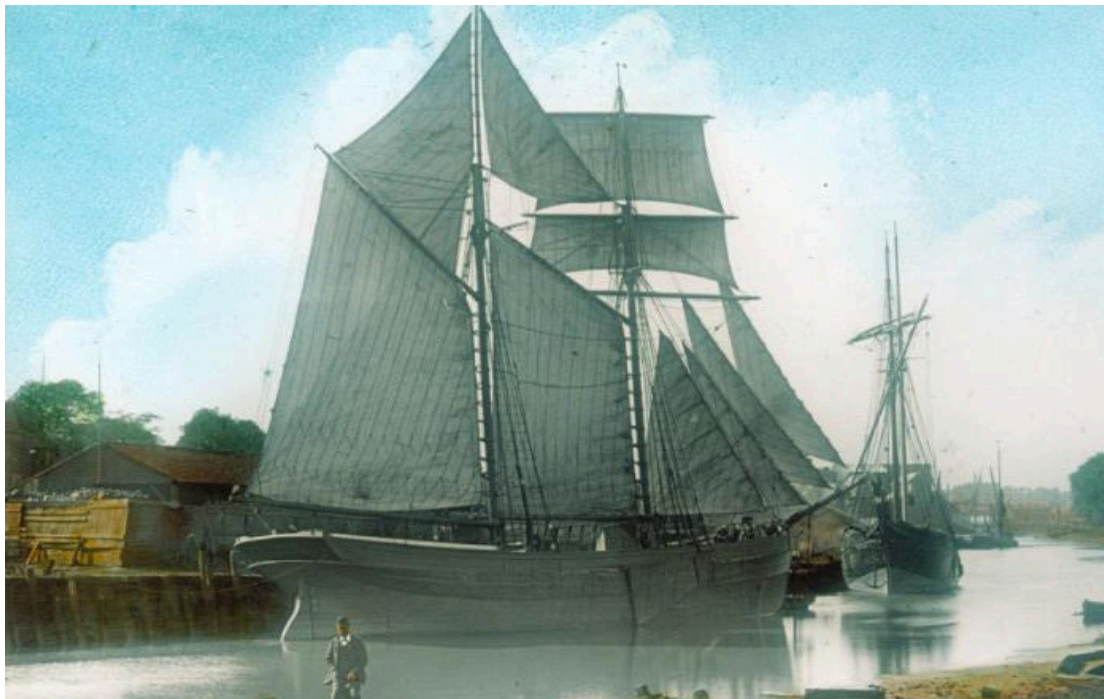
A BEGINNERS' GUIDE TO STANDARD QUAY LIES, SPIN AND MISINFORMATION:

1. "Historically, of course, Standard Quay was never actually used for shipbuilding."

FACT: Simply untrue. Since 1700, around 120 sailing vessels have been built at Standard Quay. A detailed study by respected maritime historian and Thames barge authority Richard Hugh-Perks shows the names of boats built and launched specifically at Standard Quay and dating back well into the early 18th century.

The men who built boats and ships at Standard Quay are well documented through more than 200 years. We know where they were born, where they trained and we know the names and tonnage or size of the vessels they built at Standard Quay.

If in doubt, please take a look at this picture of the Goldfinch, probably the most famous barge built at Standard Quay by 19th Century master shipbuilder John Matthew Goldfinch. Goldfinch's house still stands on Standard Quay, just a few metres from the black shed.



Read about shipbuilding at Standard Quay here:

<http://intheboatshed.net/2013/04/18/standard-quays-history-and-a-great-photo-of-sailing-berge-goldfinch/>

2. *"I read that Swale Council gave permission for the black sheds to be used for maritime industry in the 90s but they weren't used for boat building until much later."*

FACT: From 1993, when historic fishing smack Emeline was restored at Standard Quay, until 2011 when the applicant/owner/developer took control, the site, including the black sheds, was in constant use as a nationally important centre for the repair and maintenance of large traditional vessels.

Despite false claims in a report by Swale planning officer Graham Thomas (already the subject of a formal complaint) that approvals for a sail loft in the black shed 'were never implemented', council officers, including Director of Regeneration, Pete Raine, actually visited the building and saw for themselves the spars, rigging and sails being stored and maintained in the upper floor space. SBC has been asked to provide evidence to back up Mr Thomas misleading claims but none has been forthcoming.

3. *"But shipbuilding is a dying trade isn't it? Surely the boatyard shut down through lack of business."*

FACT: Let's be clear: The owner/applicant, a property developer, bought a busy, thriving, sustainable traditional boat-building yard and shut it down.

By hiking prices and removing facilities since mid-2011, Standard Quay's owner drove out an established maritime industry and the visiting Thames barges which relied upon it.

Was this was a deliberate strategy aimed at creating a lack of 'footfall' which could be then used to justify change of use to more lucrative restaurant? Isn't that what property developers do?

Thanks to exactly these kinds of waterfront development pressures, few boatyards remain with the facilities and specialist skills to maintain traditional wooden vessels. Nationally and regionally, supply is limited and demand is high.

Historic barges attract visitors. Pre-2011, Standard Quay's museum/visitor centre guest book had 6000 signatures from all over the world. Since the barges stopped coming to the quay, visitor numbers have dwindled.

4. *"The owner/applicant/developer has tried his best to run the site as a boatyard but there's just no demand."*

FACT: The skilled shipwrights driven away from the site since he took control two years ago have not been replaced.

Despite his claims to the contrary, it's highly questionable whether the applicant/owner/developer had any serious intentions to preserve maritime

industry at the site and provide the services and facilities desperately required by the traditional boat community.

Please visit the site, take the recently-erected signs giving the impression of maritime industry with a healthy pinch of salt, and ask what really goes on in the buildings today.

5. "Only a small organized group of local campaigners actually oppose the application."

FACT: In 2011, some 1,200 people put their names to an online petition calling on councillors to protect Standard Quay's buildings from precisely this kind of development. In just over a week, the petition drew local and international support from the US, Australia, Italy and Egypt, such was Standard Quay's importance in the worldwide maritime community. Hundreds more signed up after Swale Borough Council took the petition down.

So no, not a small organized group but simply a large number of democratically engaged voters and residents who care about their town's history and future...in addition to the many local organisations including Faversham Town Council, Faversham Creek Trust and the Faversham Society who oppose the current eatery scheme.

Here's a link to the petition on SBC's website:

<http://www.swale.gov.uk/epetitions/petitiondetail.aspx?petitionid=110>

6. "The owner/applicant/developer has made 'improvements' to the Quay and added new moorings."

FACT: One of the owner's first actions after taking control of the site in 2011 was to rip out the mooring rings sunk into the concrete wharf which allowed large vessels to be secured safely to the quayside.

He then constructed a new quay front East of the black sheds without permission, prompting an investigation by Swale Borough Council's planning enforcement team.

On the 9th of July 2012, a large boat moored there broke free, taking with it the vertical piles it was tied to, an episode reported to Swale Borough Council. Luckily no damage or personal injury resulted but the incident demonstrated these new facilities to be unfit for purpose.

This photo shows one of the mooring rings since removed by Standard Quay's owner.



7. "The buildings were dilapidated and badly need costly restoration"

FACT: Standard Quay's black sheds were built as basic working structures and they have served a variety of maritime and storage purposes during their lifetime. Turning them into a restaurant would not be 'restoration', but a character-destroying conversion into something they were never designed to be. Costly? Yes, of course. Necessary? No.

When the owner/developer took control of them in 2011 the buildings were carefully preserved, well-maintained and recently painted, as shown in the photo below, taken on 27 June, 2011.



7. "A restaurant would be good for tourism"

FACT: Thanks to Standard Quay, Faversham was, until 2011, one of two national centres for historic Thames barges, attracting many tourists, maritime enthusiasts, history buffs, artists and photographers to the town.

Unlike Faversham, Maldon in Essex still has a thriving barge population. Its own quay, called The Hythe, bustles with traditional craft, maritime industries and the visitors who flock to see them. For more information, please see:

<http://intheboatshed.net/2013/04/24/compare-and-contrast-standard-quay-without-its-barges-and-maldon-where-barges-are-many-and-tourists-flock/>

Tourism quango Visit Kent's 'Head of Research and Strategy' Ruth Wood sent an unsolicited email to Swale Borough Council supporting the restaurant proposal. Although Ms Wood has declined to explain why she took this initiative, we do know that:

- She sent the email after discussions with the developer.
- She admits she did not consult anyone opposing the scheme.
- Swale Borough Council did not ask for her views, or those of Visit Kent
- Her Visit Kent colleagues were initially unaware of her email

8. 'A restaurant would create jobs'

FACT: In 2010, when Swale Borough Council's head of regeneration Pete Raine visited Standard Quay, the barge yard employed 20 SKILLED maritime craftspeople and ran a pioneering City and Guilds shipwright apprentice scheme giving local young people a career in a highly-skilled trade. Despite promises to support apprentices, this scheme ended abruptly when the owner/developer/applicant took over in 2011.

Assuming it survived in the current economic climate, how many skilled, long-term jobs and careers would an eatery really provide?

9. "But if the number of parking spaces is reduced from the 97 proposed, surely a restaurant wouldn't prevent the quayside from being used for maritime industry in future."

FACT: It has elsewhere and it will here. Boatbuilding is noisy, dirty, requires a great deal of space and presents health and safety issues. What restaurant owner would open a barge-yard next door? Does anyone seriously believe that would be the applicant/owner/developer's intention if permission were granted for a waterfront eatery? Applying for 97 parking spaces - far more than any proposed restaurant would need - and then 'compromising' by accepting fewer is clearly a property developer's negotiating tactic: nothing more, nothing less.