

From Maritime to National Museum

The case study of the National Museum of Bermuda

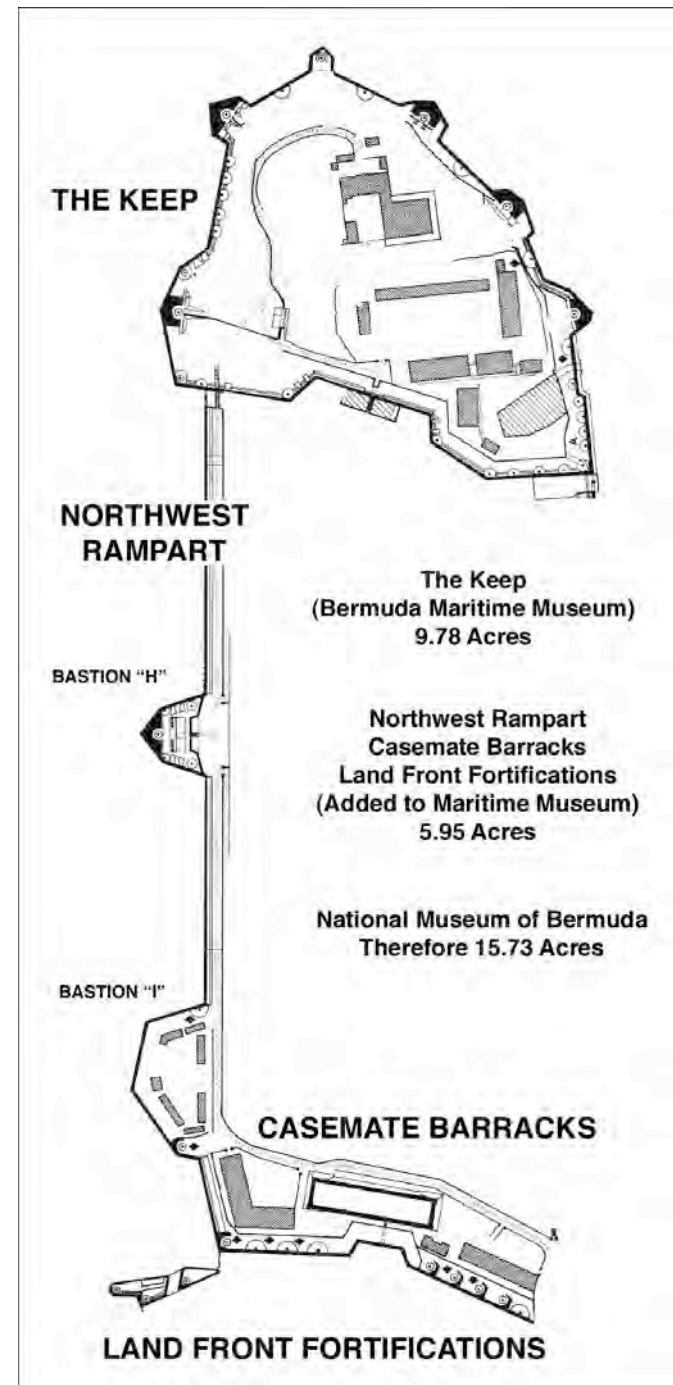
Dr. Edward Harris, NMB Executive Director



**NATIONAL MUSEUM
OF BERMUDA**

Who we are

- ❖ NMB is a not-for-profit, non-governmental registered charity
- ❖ Located in the Royal Naval Dockyard
- ❖ Housed in Bermuda's largest fort, The Keep
- ❖ The 16-acre property encloses ten Grade I listed buildings, including the Commissioner's House and Casemates Barracks



NMB Mandate



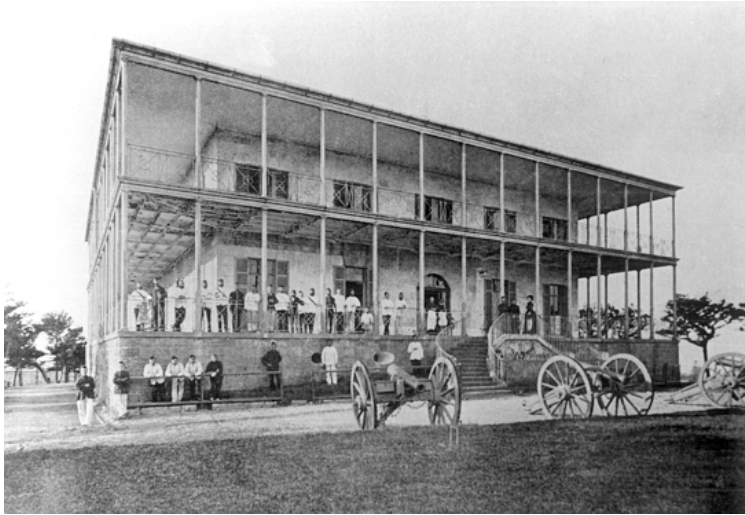
NMB actively promotes the preservation, understanding and enjoyment of Bermuda's cultural heritage through education, stewardship, historical, archaeological and scientific research, exhibition, acquisition, public outreach and advocacy.

NMB Core Values

- ❖ **Inclusiveness:** to be inclusive of multiple perspectives; reflect the diversity of Bermuda's cultural heritage; be accessible to our diverse audience; and recognise Bermuda's history as an encompassing multi-faceted story involving multiple groups of people and their experiences
- ❖ **Relevance:** to be relevant to our local and global context and our diverse local and visitor communities
- ❖ **Engagement:** to engage the local community and create exhibitions, programmes and publications that spark curiosity and a sense of discovery
- ❖ **Integrity:** to be honest, ethical and fair, and to demonstrate those values in all aspects of Museum practice, governance, and internal and external relationships
- ❖ **Excellence:** to provide an excellent visitor experience, customer service, scholarship, and education programming; follow museum, archaeological and preservation best practice; and establish high standards for everything we do
- ❖ **Sustainability:** to manage the Museum's resources to ensure its long term viability



The Royal Naval Dockyard in Bermuda



- ❖ The RN Dockyard was established at Ireland Island in 1809
- ❖ For more than 150 years the Dockyard was a refit and resupply base for the British Royal Navy
- ❖ In the 1950s the Royal Navy began to reduce its presence in Dockyard and most of its properties were ceded back to the Bermuda Government
- ❖ Left abandoned, many of these sites became derelict

The founding of the Bermuda Maritime Museum



- ❖ The Bermuda Maritime Museum was created by the Bermuda National Trust in 1974
- ❖ 1978, an Act of Parliament formally established the Museum to promote, collect, preserve, research and exhibit Bermuda's maritime history and restore the buildings of the Keep Fort

From volunteers to paid professional staff



- ❖ Initially a grassroots volunteer based organisation
- ❖ The hiring of Executive Director Dr. Edward Harris was the start of the transition to professional staff which has included archaeologists, historians, museum professionals, and conservators

Site Restoration



Commissioner's House





Funding

- ❖ Gate receipts
- ❖ Rentals
- ❖ Memberships
- ❖ Donations
- ❖ Grants
- ❖ Capital Campaigns



Research & Field Schools



- ❖ Partnering with overseas universities for the past 40 years
- ❖ Land and underwater archaeology field schools have trained more than 1,000 students since the 1980s
- ❖ The museum has facilitated historical research in a variety of projects







Advocacy - Preservation and Legislation

- ❖ NMB plays a national role in advocacy, in particular in historic preservation
- ❖ Shipwreck protection legislation
- ❖ UNESCO status for St. George's & adjoining fortifications
- ❖ Future plans: acquire UNESCO status for Dockyard

HISTORIC WRECKS ACT 2001



BERMUDA
2001 : 35

HISTORIC WRECKS ACT 2001

[Date of Assent: 27 December 2001]

[Operative Date: 30 January 2003]

ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

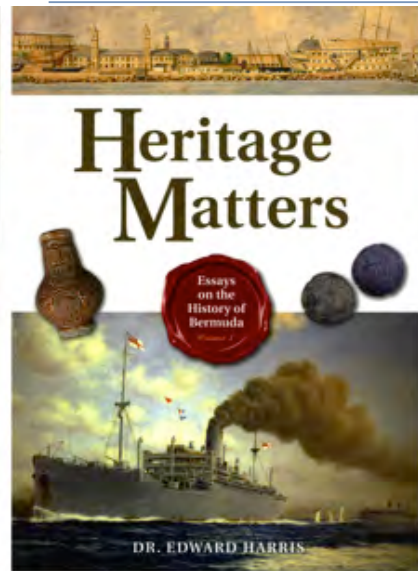
PART I PRELIMINARY	8 Licences 9 Penalties
1 Citation	PART IV OWNERSHIP, FINDERS' REGISTER AND THE NATIONAL COLLECTION
2 Interpretation	10 Ownership of wreck and historic artefacts
PART II THE HISTORIC WRECKS AUTHORITY	11 Register of finders
3 Establishment of the Authority	12 National Collection
4 Functions of the Authority	PART V MISCELLANEOUS
PART III CLASSIFICATION AND PROTECTION OF WRECKS, ETC.	13 Inspectors
5 Appointment of Custodian	14 Amnesty and abandonment of Crown claims
6 Custodian to classify wrecks and sites	15 Regulations
7 Protection of wrecks and marine heritage sites	16 Repeal

WHEREAS it is expedient to establish a Custodian of Historic Wrecks and an Historic Wrecks Authority to preserve, protect and safeguard Bermuda's underwater cultural heritage by making provision for the classification of wrecks and to control the

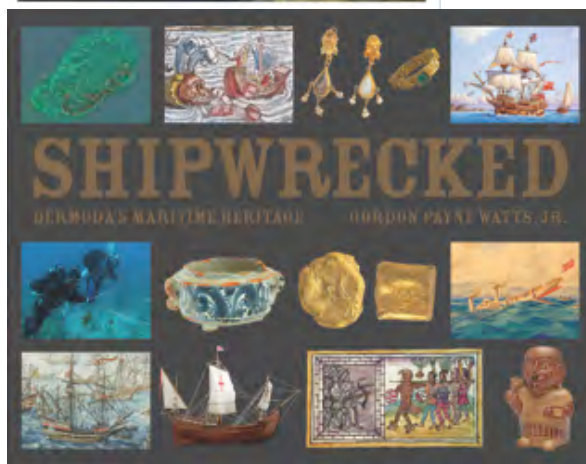
1989 Revision



Publications & Education



- ❖ The Bermuda Maritime Museum press was established in the early 1980s
- ❖ Bermuda Journal of Archaeology and Maritime History launched in 1989
- ❖ Museum has published over 40 books relating to Bermuda's history and cultural heritage over the past 30 years



Exhibitions

- ❖ The Museum's exhibitions started in one building: Queen's Exhibition Building
- ❖ First displays were created by department store window dressers
- ❖ Now we have over 16 permanent exhibits with approximately 30,000 square feet of exhibit space
- ❖ Most recent exhibits are Shipwreck Island, Children's Playhouse and Playground







The Azores & Bermuda



BERMUDA & THE WEST INDIES



BERMUDA'S DEFENCE HERITAGE



DESTINATION BERMUDA

A HISTORY OF TOURISM



The Slave Trade & Slavery in Bermuda



U-505 CAPTURED



Museum Collections



- ❖ The Museum collections grew out of the maritime collections of the Bermuda National Trust, the Bermuda Government and the Bermuda Historical Society
- ❖ Private donations increased as the Museum gained credibility, and were augmented by finds resulting from archaeological research projects
- ❖ Along the way, the Museum acquired non-maritime items which could not be accepted by other local museums, such as the BELCo Collection, and several philatelic and numismatic collections

Today the Collections include

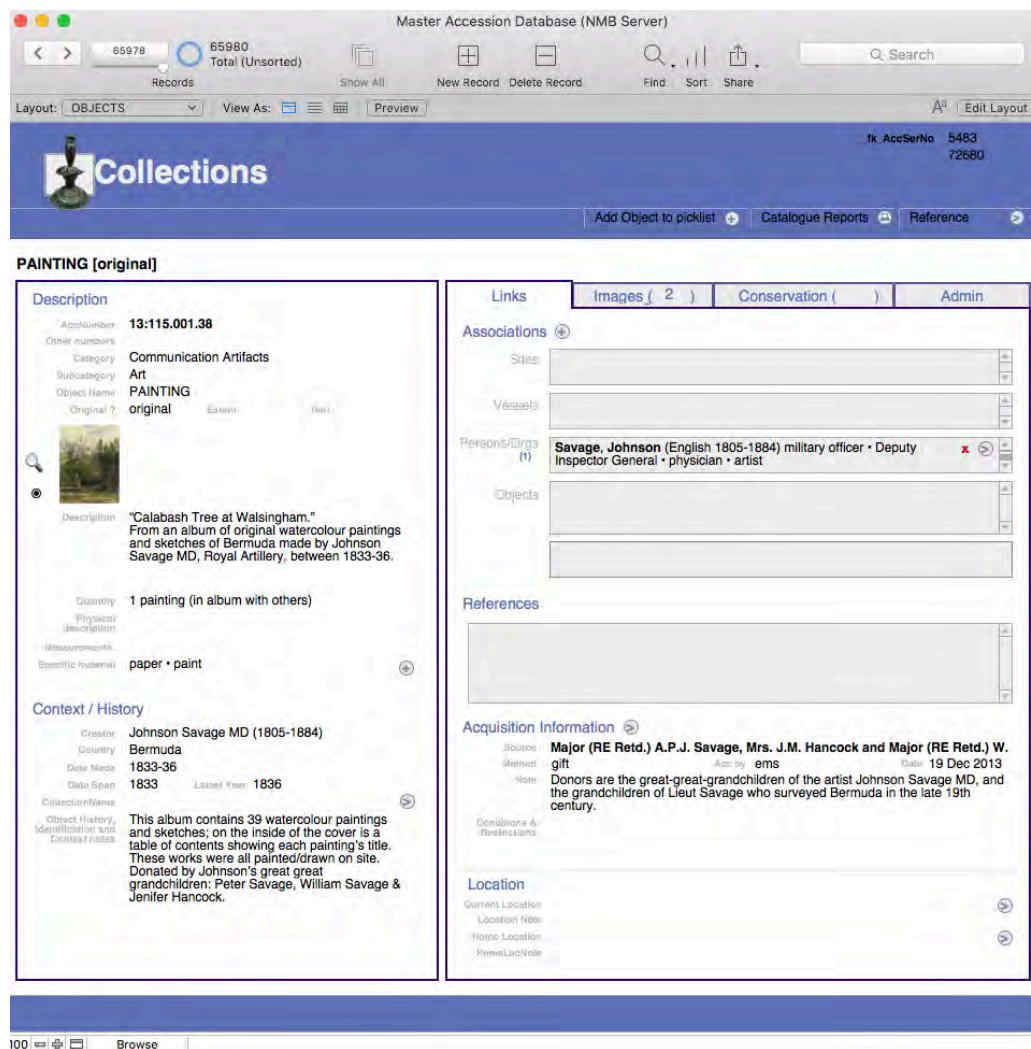
- ❖ Shipwreck artefacts illustrating 400 years of Atlantic World trade and technology
- ❖ Defence heritage collections relating to local forces and defences
- ❖ Collections relating to Bermuda's role as a naval and military base
- ❖ Small working and recreational watercraft, gear & equipment
- ❖ Land archaeology finds encompassing domestic, commercial and military sites
- ❖ Other items include rare books, maps, models, tools, personal and institutional archives, philately, and more



- ❖ Our in-house collections management system began as a simple flat-file database 25 years ago

- ❖ Today the 75,000+ objects in the database are linked to related information about people, vessels, archaeological sites, citations, and images

- ❖ The system also includes the NMB library database and conservation lab records



Becoming the National Museum & looking to the future

- ❖ Ongoing Process: the Museum's name changed in 2013 to the National Museum of Bermuda, by amendment to the Museum's Act
- ❖ Gradually our scope has expanded to include all aspects of Bermuda's cultural heritage and prioritizing collecting and research in areas where there are gaps in our collections
- ❖ However the Museum is very much grounded in Maritime History and community consultation confirmed this is the direction we should continue along
- ❖ Future of the Museum is in building on its strengths and addressing the weaknesses. It will include more community involvement, hiring an Education Officer, and establishing a Research Institute at the Casemates site

NATIONAL MUSEUM
OF BERMUDA

Strategic Plan
2016–26



NATIONAL MUSEUM
OF BERMUDA

In Local Waters

1853/1890 Ordnance House
Restoration & Exhibit Proposal







NATIONAL MUSEUM
OF BERMUDA

THE ATLANTIC WORLD HISTORY INSTITUTE





Find out more! www.nmb.bm

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF BERMUDA

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VISIT | EXPLORE | RESEARCH | VENUE HIRE | LEARN | JOIN | SHOP

SHIPWRECK ISLAND

Sunken Clues to Bermuda's Past

EXPLORE THE EXHIBIT

Find out about Bermuda's discovery and early settlement through a collection of 16th and 17th century shipwreck artifacts recovered from local waters.

Admission

Open every day 9:30 am – 5 pm (last admission 4 pm)
Commissioner's House is closed due to hurricane repairs... Opening soon!
+1 (441) 234-1418 | info@nmb.bm

The Keep, Royal Naval Dockyard, Bermuda

Join Us

Become part of the Museum family and help support the protection and preservation of Bermuda's cultural heritage.

[BECOME A MEMBER](#)

Kids under 16 are FREE!

Adults (16+)	\$15
Seniors (65+)	\$12
Members (with valid membership card)	Free

[PLAN YOUR VISIT](#)

2015 Award Winner!

The National Museum of Bermuda was named 2015 TripAdvisor Travelers' Choice Award winner.

[READ OUR REVIEW](#)

Genealogy Database

Search decades of research by Bermuda's foremost genealogist, Clara Hollis Hallett.

Coming Soon...

EXHIBITS

Explore 500 years of Bermuda history and culture. Bastions, cannons, shipwreck artifacts, water crafts, art and spectacular views are all found in Bermuda's largest fort.

[EXPLORE THE EXHIBITS](#)