

## PRESS RELEASE

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### ROYAL TUDOR FOUNDATION STONE REDISCOVERED AT UCL WHICH PLEDGES TO RETURN IT TO DEPTFORD DOCKYARD



The stone is unveiled at University College London on February 13<sup>th</sup> 2014 and UCL pledges its return to Deptford. From left to right: Sally MacDonald, Director of Museums and Public Engagement, UCL, Dr Negley Harte, Hon. Fellow and Hon. Research Fellow in History, UCL, Chris Mazeika from *Deptford Is* community group and Dr Jonathan Foyle, Chief Executive of World Monuments Fund Britain. (Photo: Paul Clarke for WMF Britain)

The stone marking Henry VIII's foundation of the Royal Naval Dockyard at Deptford 500 years ago has been rediscovered behind a false wall at University College London. UCL has pledged to return this historically significant find to Deptford Dockyard which comes at a crucial time as the Mayor of London is expected to make a decision on current redevelopment proposals for the site in March 2014.

Bearing the initials of Henry VIII and his first queen Katherine of Aragon [H K] with a marriage knot, the stone belongs to the original naval storehouse built by the King in 1513, the remains of which are now a Scheduled Ancient Monument. It marks the official royal foundation of the dockyard to the service of Henry VIII, when the navy became established – a story of ships built to sail the world, defend Britain and discover new lands, commanded by famous names such as Sir Francis Drake (c.1540-1596), Sir Walter Raleigh (c.1554-1618) and James Cook (1728-1779).

Dr Jonathan Foyle, Chief Executive of World Monuments Fund Britain, says:

“The rediscovery of the foundation stone reminds us that this site was the foremost royal dockyard of the Tudor period, and a historic site of national importance at this critical moment when its future is to be decided by the Mayor of London. We hope that UCL’s pledge will help to inform the Mayor’s decision on the scheme so that the cultural heritage is fully recognised and expressed in any future redevelopment”.

The stone was rediscovered by Chris Mazeika of local community group *Deptford Is*, whose research on the Tudor dockyard led him to 1950’s drawings of the artefact. It was only on a chance visit to UCL that Chris glimpsed the stone in the Geography Department, where it had lain forgotten for over 50 years since it was salvaged from the bomb-damaged dockyard after World War II, and Chris immediately identified its significance. The support of WMF Britain and Dr Negley Harte, Hon. Fellow and Hon. Research Fellow in History at UCL helped secure the university’s gift.

Sally MacDonald, Director of Museums and Public Engagement at UCL, comments:

“We were amazed to find this remarkable piece of brickwork hidden behind a panel at UCL, and fascinated to rediscover its history and provenance. It would be very exciting to see it returned to its original location in Deptford, where it can open up new potential for research and engagement with London’s history.”

The pledge from UCL comes just weeks before a decision is expected from the Mayor of London on a planning application to redevelop the historic dockyard area, now known as Convoy’s Wharf. The current proposal (by developer Hutchison Whampoa and architect Sir Terry Farrell) is a scheme to include 3,500 homes, retail outlets and a hotel within skyscrapers that neither enhance nor respect Deptford Dockyard’s profound history and archaeology.

World Monuments Fund Britain included Deptford Dockyard and Sayes Court Garden (which is on the same site) on the 2014 World Monuments Watch of cultural heritage at risk due to the global significance of the site’s history and archaeology and the threat it faces from this large-scale development.

Claire Price, Listed Buildings Caseworker for England, Council for British Archaeology, adds:

“The foundation stone, and the extensive above and below ground remains on site at Deptford, represent an exceptionally important element of Britain’s heritage as a major seafaring nation”.

In partnership with the Council for British Archaeology and local community group *Deptford Is*, WMF Britain advocates for the expression and enjoyment of Deptford’s rich history in an appropriate development.

Other high profile supporters calling for the recognition of Deptford Dockyard's significance include Dame Joan Ruddock, MP and TV historian Dan Snow, President of the Council for British Archaeology.

## Notes to Editors

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### The foundation stone

The foundation stone consists of a brick panel inscribed with a royal cypher of Henry VIII and Katherine of Aragon and the date 'Anno Christi 1513' beneath a moulded brick Tudor arch. Incorporated into the arch is a moulded brick trefoil motif crowned with a small window/ niche. The whole structure is approximately 2.5m high.

### The history of the site

In 1513 Henry VIII founded the Royal naval Dockyard at Deptford, and the King's Yard became the foremost Royal dockyard of the Tudor period. Hundreds of warships and trading vessels were built here, including ships for exploration, science and empire. In 1517 the *Mary Rose* along with the Peter Pomegranate, the Great Bark and the Lesser Bark rode in the wet dock at Deptford. The *Mary Rose* was repaired at Deptford in 1523, and the dockyard remained a naval powerhouse for another 350 years. The site also includes John Evelyn's seventeenth-century garden at Sayes Court, one of the most famous and revolutionary gardens of its time. Deptford's inclusion on the World Monuments Watch is testament to the site's value as a heritage asset despite what its outward appearance may indicate. The majority of the area has been concreted over in past decades but recent excavation has revealed the dockyard's extensive maritime heritage. Many large structures survive intact below (and in some cases above) ground level.

### About WMF Britain

World Monuments Fund is the leading independent organization devoted to saving the world's most treasured places. For 50 years, working in more than 90 countries, our highly skilled experts have applied proven and effective techniques to preserve important architectural and cultural heritage sites around the globe. Through partnerships with local communities, funders, and governments, we inspire an enduring commitment to stewardship for future generations. Headquartered in New York, WMF has offices and affiliates worldwide. Over 15 years, WMF Britain has secured the future of many significant UK-related sites. For more information see [www.wmf.org.uk](http://www.wmf.org.uk).

### What is the World Monuments Watch?

Launched in 1996 and issued every two years, the World Monuments Watch calls international attention to threatened cultural heritage sites around the world. Watch-listing provides an opportunity for sites and their nominators to raise public awareness, foster local participation, advance innovation and collaboration, and demonstrate effective solutions. The process also serves as a vehicle for requesting WMF assistance for select projects.

The list is assembled by a panel of international heritage experts in the fields of archaeology, architecture, art history, and preservation. For many historic sites, inclusion on the Watch is the best, and sometimes the only, hope for survival.

Since the Watch began, more than 740 sites in 133 countries and territories—including those on the 2014 Watch—have been included. The international attention given to Watch sites provides a vital tool with which local entities may leverage funding from a variety of sources, including municipal, regional, and national governments; foundations; corporate sponsors; international aid organisations; and private donors. Since 1996, WMF has contributed over \$90 million to date; while almost \$200 million has been allocated to the sites by other entities. The social impact of the Watch is also significant, especially through Watch Day, a component of the program established in 2012 that aims to reconnect communities to their heritage through public events.

### Press Contacts

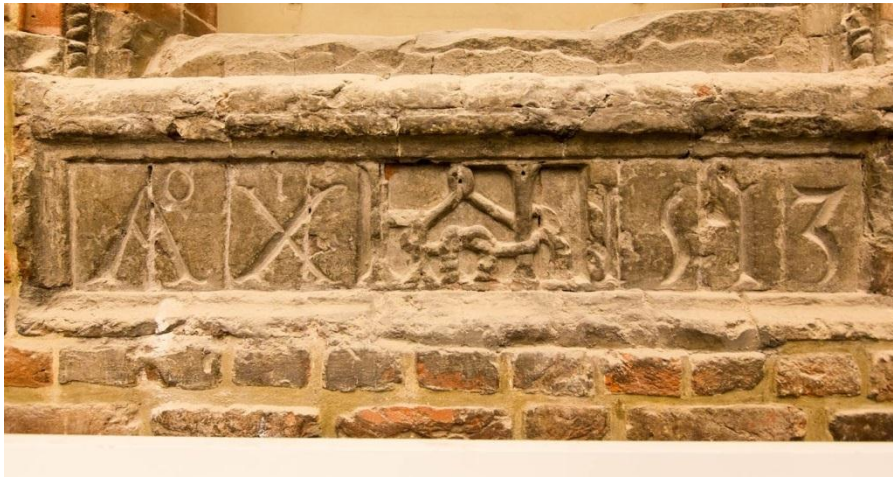
For interview requests, imagery and more information on the discovery of the Tudor foundation stone please contact: Sarah Halstead at Heritage PR Limited, 07918 121905 or [sarah@heritagepr.org.uk](mailto:sarah@heritagepr.org.uk).

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**Additional images - high res images available on request:**



The foundation stone consists of a brick panel inscribed with a royal cypher beneath a moulded brick Tudor arch. Incorporated into the arch is a moulded brick trefoil motif crowned with a small window/niche. The whole structure is approximately 2.5m high. (Photo: Paul Clarke for WMF Britain).



The inscribed royal cypher of Henry VIII and Katherine of Aragon and the date 'Anno Christi 1513'. (Photo: Paul Clarke for WMF Britain).

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