

**U DWA**

**Records of The Watch Ashore**

**1933-[2010]**

**Accession number:** 2012/33

**Historical Background/Biographical Background:** The Watch Ashore (WA) was formed by the Honourable Mrs Dorothy Nelson-Ward in 1933. It had arisen from an interest in the discussions between her husband, Admiral Philip Nelson-Ward, President of the Officers Federation, and Captain WH Coombs, founder of the Officers (Merchant Navy) Federation, at their Sussex home. She felt that the wives and mothers of officers would be eager to assist in the work to improve conditions for Merchant Navy (MN) Officers at a time of intense depression within the British shipping industry.

The aim was to provide a useful social service where Officers' wives were able to meet others who shared the loneliness and special responsibilities that resulted in having husbands away for long periods. The WA was not a policy forming organisation, but endorsed and furthered policy in shipping affairs, aiming to be non-political. The Rules agreed at their inaugural meeting on 20 February 1933 state that they shall 'form a bond of mutual interest between the wives, mothers, sisters, daughters and others interested in the wellbeing of the Officer personnel of the Merchant Navy of the British Empire' and 'further and promote the objects of the Officers (MN) Federation' U DWA/1/4/1.

Their pre-war work was divided equally between being a 'pressure' and social group. From 1939 they quietly and effectively assisted existing bodies, such as the National Savings Movement, hospital visits and knitting thousands of garments. Shortly after the end of hostilities in Europe the WA were asked to augment a successful effort made to reject a proposal that the income of MN Officers should be reduced.

Following the inaugural meeting on 20 February 1933 WA branches formed in most principal ports quickly, beginning with Cardiff in 1934 followed by Glasgow and Liverpool in 1934. By the end of 1946 The Watch Ashore had 12 branches: Aberdeen, Bath, Belfast, Bristol and Avonmouth, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Falmouth, Glasgow, Merseyside, Penarth, Teeside and the North East Coast Section (Blyth, Jarrow, Newcastle, North and South Shields, Sunderland, Whitley Bay and Jesmond Dene).

By 1949 the social aspect of WA had become the most important as there was less demand for it as a pressure group. Its 1600 active membership took part in a range of activities such as lectures, dances, whist drives, excursions, domestic science demonstrations, parties for children whose fathers had been lost at sea and the Sea Cadets. The WA was also represented on the Governing Board of the British Ship Adoption Society. The 1950s saw the WA raise concerns over war widows' pensions, the extension of the privileges enabling wives to travel in their husbands' ships from port to port in the UK and on the Continent, being able to live on board while in port, the installation of radar in every MN vessel and provisions for officers and men leaving the sea due to war-strain.

In 1976 WA undertook a reorganisation with the creation of a triennially elected chairman. However the organisation has suffered from a shrinking membership, mirroring the fate of the British Merchant Navy. This has meant that many of the meetings have returned to their beginnings with many being held in member's homes.

In 2013 WA has 6 branches, Plymouth, Southampton, Glasgow, London, Edinburgh and Humber who still take part in charity fund raising, outings and activities. The organisation has

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representatives on various Merchant Navy Welfare Boards and are involved in the Seafarers Link, a phone service for retired seafarers.

**Custodial history:** Deposited by Margaret Gray, former Chairman) on behalf of the Executive Committee in November 2012, with additional items deposited by Mary Pounder, Vice-Chair, in 2014

**Description:** Minutes, correspondence, calendars of events, photographs and other papers relating to the national and local branches of the organisation. Local level material mainly relates to Glasgow and Merseyside branches. Also includes copies of The Watch Ashore, a short history of the organisation written for their 25th anniversary in 1958 and updated for their 50th anniversary in 1983.

### Arrangement

U DWA/1 National

U DWA/2 Branches

U DWA/3 Events and Publicity

U DWA/4 Correspondence

**Extent:** 4 boxes

**Related material:** Mission to Seafarers [U DMS]

**Access conditions:** Some of the records in this collection contain sensitive personal information. In accordance with data protection legislation, records containing sensitive personal information are not available for public inspection for 75 years if the information relates to adults, or 100 years if the information relates to children. In some circumstances access may be granted for research purposes. To request access or for further information please contact [archives@hull.ac.uk](mailto:archives@hull.ac.uk).

Access to all other material will be granted to any accredited reader.

**Language:** English

<b>U DWA/1</b>	<b>National</b> Contains material that influences and impacts on the organisation as a whole. This includes minutes, matters relating to membership, newsletters and the organisation's structure and history. 12 files	<b>1933-[2004]</b>
<b>U DWA/1/1</b>	<b>Minutes</b> The material within this sub-series has been sorted into the different committees by the titles that appear on the records. The topics included at item level are not an exhaustive list of the file's contents.  Information from The Watch Ashore states that at	<b>1933-[1995]</b>

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its head is the Executive Committee which is made up of a Chairman, Vice Chairman and Treasurer. Until 2013 this also included an Executive member. The Executive meet twice a year with one meeting approximately six months before the AGM. The Council is made up of the Executive Committee and branch representatives, usually the branch chairman. They come together for a meeting before the AGM. The General Minutes are possibly from yearly national meetings. The Committee and Management Minutes would appear to be National Executive Minutes.

7 files

U DWA/1/1/1

Executive Committee Minutes

Nov 1964-[1995]

This collection is not a complete run, but mainly covers 1964-1986.

Venues of the meetings include: Welcombe Hotel, Stratford-upon-Avon; The St Ermin's Hotel, London; Royal Hotel, York; The Park Hotel, Cardiff; Rodney House, Dolphin Square, London; St George's Hotel, Liverpool; The Royal Station Hotel, Ferensway, Hull; Cliff Hotel, Dovercourt; Royal Scottish Automobile Club, Blytheswood Square, Glasgow; Charing Cross Hotel, London; Regal Hotel, Cleveleys, Lancashire; SV Carrick, Clyde Street, Glasgow and other addresses in Glasgow, Plymouth, Southampton, Altrincham near Manchester, Saltash in Cornwall, Timperley in Cheshire and Manchester.

It includes typed minutes, some with agendas and Reports from Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer, some with accounts and records of income and expenditure. Also contains matters related to the organisation and attendance of future meetings, the loss of the 'Derbyshire', details of correspondence received, the creation of a newsletter, charitable donations from the organisation and a legacy, increase to subscriptions, possibility of the Belfast branch closing due to the troubles, possible association with Dutch group, copy of Standing Orders, possible formation of new groups and the closure of others, lights on life jackets, investments, disposal of records, choosing of Executive Committee and President, the possibility of drawing up a list of members willing to provide accommodation for wives visiting their husbands or take them shopping and badge designs.

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Also contains undated Directive from Executive Committee to branches concerning the formation of a Merchant Navy Day.

1 file

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U DWA/1/1/2

Committee Minutes

1933-1954

Venues of meetings include: Captain Coombs' Chambers, No.6 Crown Office Row, Temple, London, EC4 and 23 Leadenhall Street, London, EC3.

The collection includes minutes for Inaugural and First Committee meetings with signatures of attendees and rules of organisation. It also contains matters related to election of members to the committee, payment of fees and fundraising with handwritten notes, letter from The Watch Ashore detailing progress achieved, future policy and asking for help enrolling new members (Jul 1933), possibility of starting a prize draw, Residential Clubs, the admission of widows as members of The Watch Ashore, formation of Merseyside and Southampton branches, signatures of attendees, condolences sent to bereaved family members, attempts to secure venues for meetings, news and reports from different branches and election of members.

1 file

U DWA/1/1/3

Triennial (Tri-annual) Minutes

1936-1994

Venues for meetings include: 23 Leadenhall Street, London EC3; Great Eastern Hotel, Liverpool Street, London EC2; HQS Wellington, Temple Stairs, Victoria Embankment, WC2; HMS Calliope, Elswick, Newcastle-upon-Tyne; Sailors' Home, Leith.

Contains typed minutes, some with agendas, with list of attendees and includes re-election of officers, Reports from Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Management Committee and contributions from Captain WH Coombs. Also includes matters related to amendments to rules, mention of the death in an air raid of the founder and first President, Mrs Nelson-Ward, the

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extensive war work carried out during the Second World War by members, the creation of Penarth branch, details of branch news and contributions to their local areas such as restoration of Memorial window in Glasgow Cathedral and helping to stitch a tapestry depicting history of Southampton during the war, media contacts, recruitment leaflet and the writing of The Watch Ashore book detailing the organisation's history.  
1 file

U DWA/1/1/4

General Minutes

1943-1993

Venues for the meetings include: George Hotel, Nottingham; Park Hotel, Cardiff; The Queen Hotel, Chester; The Park Court Hotel, London.

Includes agenda, Chairman's, Secretary's, Treasurer's and branch reports, details of correspondence received, closure of Merseyside and Manchester branches, charity donations, discussions about the Presidential role and organisation's badge, election of committee members, Lady Headley's death and memorial, donation, drive for new members, updates on projects being undertaken by organisation, details of triennial meetings and the closure of the Harwich and Dovercourt branch.

Also includes letter to unknown recipient detailing the proceedings of the October 1943 meeting.  
1 file

U DWA/1/1/5

Management Minutes

1955-1964

Venues for the meetings include: Norway House, Inverleith Place, Edinburgh; HQS Wellington, Temple Stairs, Victoria Embankment, WC2; Memorial Hall, Institute of Marine Engineers, Mark Lane, London EC; Conference Room, Civic Centre, Southampton.

Includes matters related to representations on the Management Committee, increased subscriptions, Treasurer's and Secretary's Reports, modernisation of toilets at docks, PAYE contributions, nomination of officers, death of members, Jubilee Book, pensions, provision of medical care on ships, rule changes, Merchant Shipping Bill and introduction of a tape recorder to record the meetings.  
1 file

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U DWA/1/1/6	<p>Special Minutes</p> <p>Includes notification of Special meeting to be held to discuss the future constitution of the Central Committee and the finances of the Association. Held on board HQS Wellington, Temple Stairs, Victoria Embankment, WC2. Minutes detail matters relating to formation of General Purposes Committee, subscription increase and travel expenses.</p> <p>1 file</p>	Sep-Oct 1961
U DWA/1/1/7	<p>Council Minutes</p> <p>Veunes for meetings include: Ca'doro Restaurant and Central Hotel, Glasgow; HQS Wellington, Temple Stairs, Victoria Embankment, WC2; The Park Hotel, Cardiff; St George's Hotel, Liverpool; Duke of Cornwall Hotel, Plymouth; Cairn Hotel, Harrogate.</p> <p>Includes reports from Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer with some records showing income and expenditure. Also contains list of attendees, issues relating to the newsletter, details of correspondence received, possible Resolutions, closure of Belfast branch, visits to other Societies and the writing of The Watch Ashore book detailing the organisation's history.</p> <p>1 file</p>	1967-1994
U DWA/1/2	<p><b>Membership</b></p> <p>Contains lists of names of members with blank application forms and a membership card.</p> <p>2 files</p>	<b>[1933-1989]</b>
U DWA/1/2/1	<p>Membership lists</p> <p>Lists of names of members, some with contact details. Some lists appear to include members from all branches, but others are from individual branches such as Manchester &amp; District, Penarth, Glasgow and South Shields.</p> <p>Also includes membership card for Mrs E Hunter, Glasgow branch (1951).</p> <p>1 file</p> <p><b>This item contains personal sensitive information and is not available for public inspection for 75 years until Jan 2061. This is in accordance with data protection legislation. If you have a query about access to this record please contact <a href="mailto:archives@hull.ac.uk">archives@hull.ac.uk</a>.</b></p>	1962-1985

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U DWA/1/2/2	<p>Membership application forms Blank application forms. The earlier examples detail the aims of The Watch Ashore with later versions including historical details of the organisation. They include the different levels of membership with subscription fees. Early examples request information on relationship to member of Merchant Navy with later copies extending membership to all with an interest in British shipping. Each copy contains information on the Executive Committee with President and Vice Presidents listed, including Dame Anna Neagle.</p> <p>One application form appears to be targeted at the Merchant Seaman, asking if concerned about the family they leave behind and highlights the support that The Watch Ashore can provide. 1 file</p>	[1933-1980s]
U DWA/1/3	<p><b>Newsletters</b> Annual Executive Committee newsletters detailing branch news general organisational news 1 file</p>	1988-1998
U DWA/1/3/1	<p>Newsletters Annual Executive Committee newsletters detailing branch news general organisational news (1988-1995, 1998). 1 file</p>	1988-1998
U DWA/1/4	<p><b>Foundation and nature of organisation</b> Copies of Branch and National Rules and Constitution of The Watch Ashore, copies of Standing Orders and histories of the organisation. 2 files</p>	[1933-2004]
U DWA/1/4/1	<p>Constitution, Rules and Standing Orders Copies of Branch and National Rules and Constitution of The Watch Ashore which include details of the objects of the organisation, membership, subscription, various committees, how and when meetings and branches to be held, financial matters, officer's duties and potential dissolution ([1933], 1951, 1955, 1970, 1976, 1986). Also includes copies of Standing Orders detailing the submission of resolutions and amendments for consideration by committees (undated). 1 file</p>	[1933]-1986

U DWA/1/4/2      Histories of The Watch Ashore      [1958-2004]  
Contains brief histories of the organisation.  
Includes leaflet focusing on branch activities  
between 1944 and 1946; Original and photocopy  
of booklet 'The Watch Ashore 1933-1958' by  
Janet Dunbar detailing short history of  
organisation written for their Silver Jubilee year. It  
was published privately for the members and  
associates of The Watch Ashore and contains  
information related to each branch and the names  
of members at the time of writing; A short history  
of the organisation 'The Watch Ashore 1933-1988'  
edited by Barbara Robinson. It details its founding  
and short histories of each branch. Published  
privately for the members and associates.  
1 file

U DWA/2      **Branches**      **1944-2009**  
The material in this series comprises items related  
to a specific branch. References to individual  
branches may also be found in other sections of  
this catalogue. The branch histories have been  
drawn from a number of sources. These include  
the Committee Meeting Minutes (U DWA/1/1/2),  
histories written for the organisation (U  
DWA/1/4/2) and The Watch Ashore website  
(<http://www.watchashore.org.uk/>). This is not an  
exhaustive list as other Branches are mentioned  
within the Minutes, but due to the lack of records it  
is not possible to state whether these were distinct  
Branches or formed smaller Sections within larger  
Branches.

The branches in this series have been ordered  
chronologically from the date of foundation and  
comprise:

U DWA/2/1 Cardiff No individual records currently  
held  
U DWA/2/2 Merseyside  
U DWA/2/3 Southampton No individual records  
currently held  
U DWA/2/4 Penarth No individual records  
currently held  
U DWA/2/5 North-East Coast No individual  
records currently held  
U DWA/2/6 Glasgow  
U DWA/2/7 Bristol and Avon No individual records  
currently held  
U DWA/2/8 Edinburgh  
U DWA/2/9 Belfast No individual records currently  
held



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U DWA/2/10 Teesside No individual records currently held

U DWA/2/11 Aberdeen No individual records currently held

U DWA/2/12 Humber

U DWA/2/13 Harwich and Dovercourt No individual records currently held

U DWA/2/14 London No individual records currently held

U DWA/2/15 Manchester and District No individual records currently held

U DWA/2/16 Plymouth No individual records currently held

U DWA/2/17 Fleetwood No individual records currently held

U DWA/2/18 Burton and Derby No individual records currently held

4 files, 2 bundles and 9 volumes

### U DWA/2/1

#### Cardiff

Cardiff is considered to be the oldest Watch Ashore Branch. There is some discrepancy as to the date of its formation as the early Minute Books and papers were destroyed in the bombing of Cardiff. Correspondence and early minutes of the National organisation in this collection indicate that the Branch was formed in 1933. The 21st anniversary dinner party took place in February 1956. During the Second World War knitting parties were held and members visited Royal Hamadriad and Glan Ely Hospitals with gifts of fruit, cigarettes and notepaper. In 1947 the Branch provided Christmas parties with over 100 children aged 4 to 14 attending at the Grand Hotel, Cardiff. Father Christmas would either be played by the Lord Mayor, his Deputy or a Master Mariner whose ship was in dock. The members were able to participate in card parties, dances and functions. The Branch also presented a Cup to the Cadets at the Richardson Smith Nautical College at Cardiff.

In 1974 the Branch nearly came to a close due to the retirement of its chairman and an aging membership. However an appeal by the local newspaper inviting people to a Cheese and Wine party generated new interest and members which allowed the Branch to continue. Cardiff hosted the Golden Jubilee celebrations of The Watch Ashore. The 1988 history (U DWA/1/4/2) shows that the membership stood at 11 with meetings being held in members' homes.

We currently hold no individual records for this branch.

<b>U DWA/2/2</b>	<b>Merseyside</b> The Merseyside branch was inaugurated in April 1934, but many of its early records were destroyed in the Second World War. Their meetings were at first held in Billy's Café, Charing Cross, Birkenhead then later in the Overseas Club, Liverpool. Their meetings consisted of outings, talks and fundraising activities. They have made donations to Mersey Mission to Seamen, King George's Fund for Sailors and the Royal Liverpool Seaman's Orphan Institution. The branch also had a history of campaigning through their local MP and actively celebrating local and national anniversaries.  The material consists of minute books for various committees and a register of members. 9 volumes	<b>1948-1986</b>
U DWA/2/2/1	Minutes Includes names of committee, details of past and future events, contacts with other groups, matters related to organisation and attendance of future meetings, charitable donations by the organisation and contact details of members. 1 volume <b>This item contains personal sensitive information and is not available for public inspection for 75 years until Jan 2038. This is in accordance with data protection legislation. If you have a query about access to this record please contact <a href="mailto:archives@hull.ac.uk">archives@hull.ac.uk</a>.</b>	Jun 1948-Dec 1962
U DWA/2/2/2	Merseyside Notes Notebook with single page of events and includes reference to donation of bollard and brass plaque to Maritime Museum. 1 volume	1958-1959
U DWA/2/2/3	Minutes Includes names of committee, details of past and future events, contacts with other groups, matters related to organisation and attendance of future meetings and charitable donations by the organisation. 1 volume	Jan 1963-Dec 1973

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U DWA/2/2/4	<p>Register Contains names and addresses of members and their attendance at meetings. 1 volume <b>This item contains personal sensitive information and is not available for public inspection for 75 years until Jan 2055. This is in accordance with data protection legislation. If you have a query about access to this record please contact archives@hull.ac.uk.</b></p>	1964-1979
U DWA/2/2/5	<p>Committee Minutes Includes names of committee, details of past and future events, contacts with other groups, matters related to organisation and attendance of future meetings, charitable donations by the organisation including the Hull Trawler disaster and details of prizes for various raffles. 1 volume</p>	Jan 1968-Sep 1972
U DWA/2/2/6	<p>Committee Minutes Includes names of committee, details of past and future events, contacts with other groups, matters related to organisation and attendance of future meetings, charitable donations by the organisation and details of prizes for various raffles. 1 volume</p>	Oct 1972-Jul 1977
U DWA/2/2/7	<p>Minutes Includes names of committee, details of past and future events, contacts with other groups, matters related to organisation and attendance of future meetings and charitable donations by the organisation 1 volume</p>	Jan 1974- Dec1983
U DWA/2/2/8	<p>Committee Minutes Includes names of committee, details of past and future events, contacts with other groups, matters related to organisation and attendance of future meetings, charitable donations by the organisation and designing of a plaque to be placed on a bollard on esplanade. 1 volume</p>	Sep 1977-Apr 1984

U DWA/2/2/9

**Committee Minutes**

Includes names of committee, details of past and future events, contacts with other groups, subscription charges, death of members, matters related to organisation and attendance of future meetings, charitable donations by the organisation and attempts to find new venue for meetings.  
1 volume

May 1984-Jul  
1986

U DWA/2/3

**Southampton**

The Southampton Branch was first formed in 1936, but meetings discontinued during the Second World War due to wartime conditions. In December 1949 suggestions were made to restart the Branch and this happened in February 1950 at the Southampton Master Mariners' Club, moving later to the more central Polygon Hotel. The Branch activities included talks, luncheons, visits and whist drives with fundraising for many charities including the Holy Rood Merchant Navy Memorial Fund. The Branch were part of a group of 76 embroiderers from 14 women's groups in Southampton who created a nine foot long embroidery depicting the town on D-Day. By 1977 the active membership of the Branch had fallen due, in part, to the change of use of Southampton port to include more passenger ships as merchant shipping declined.

We currently hold no individual records for this branch.

U DWA/2/4

**Penarth**

The Penarth Branch was formed in 1940 and continued to provide comfort to its members throughout the Second World War. Their fundraising activities enabled them to make donations to the King George Fund for Sailors, the Merchant Navy School and the Lifeboat Fund. Members were also active workers for the Red Cross.

We currently hold no individual records for this branch.

U DWA/2/5

**North-East Coast**

Although there had been a Branch in the area prior to the Second World War it had lapsed. A meeting to restart the Branch was held in November 1943 at the Royal Station Hotel, Newcastle-on-Tyne. Fundraising through dances and concerts allowed the Branch to make a

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donation towards the opening of the Merchant Venturers Club in Newcastle. In 1944 the Branch was split into three Sections. South Section encompassed Sunderland, South Shields and up river to Hebburn; the North Section, Blyth to North Shields and Whitley Bay; and all other places came to be under the Central Section. Over the next year or two separate Sections were formed including Jarrow, Blyth, Newcastle, Whitley Bay, North Shields, South Shields, Sunderland and Jesmond creating the largest Watch Ashore Branch. Each Section created its own programme of events, including talks, outings, whist-drives and sales.

The Branch formed its own Concert Party in 1947. Visits between the Section members and other Branches were common. In 1951 two sisters who had been born in South Shields, but had moved to Vancouver, Canada, visited the Branch and hoped to set up a sister-organisation in Canada. In October 1952 the Merchant Navy Memorial Window to those who had died in the Second World War was dedicated in Christ Church, North Shields.

The Sunderland Branch was formed in May 1944, aiming to create a Section that included Sunderland and South Shields. After a few months the South Shields members formed an independent Section and the Sunderland Section continued as part of the North East Coast Branch until 1952 when they became self-supporting. Their social activities include whist and bridge drives and visits and raise funds for seamen's organisations.

We currently hold no individual records for this branch.

**U DWA/2/6**

### **Glasgow**

**1944-2009**

The Glasgow branch was formed in February 1944. Beginning with existing members of an English Watch Ashore branch it grew into an active body. An extensive programme of dances, whist drives, talks, demonstrations and outings provided a variety of social activities for its membership. They made a number of charitable donations to organisations such as the British Sailors' Society, the Royal Navy Lifeboat Fund, the King George VI Memorial Fund and to the Merchant Navy window in Glasgow Cathedral. In

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1958 their fortnightly meetings included a drama group and regular visits to the Edinburgh branch. Members also undertook to visit any Merchant Seaman who was admitted to hospital in Glasgow who were without friends or family locally. Its membership peaked at about 100 members with approximately 60 members attending through the 1990s. Membership has since declined, but the Branch is still very active in their social and charity activities (2013).

It would appear that the three Scottish Branches, Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow, came together for meetings. The collection includes the Minutes of their first meeting held in 1950 at Taypark Hotel, Broughty Ferry, Dundee and can be found in U DWA/2/6/4.

The material in this sub-series comprises minutes, calendars of events and a savings book  
4 files and 1 bundle

U DWA/2/6/1

Glasgow Branch papers

1944-2009

Includes undated newspaper cuttings about the branch badge and branch news and events, cards and telegrams marking 21st Anniversary and cards marking 65th Anniversary of the branch (1965, 2009), handwritten note, Report to Central and West of Scotland Ports Welfare Committee (2004), letter from Bunty Allan, member of The Watch Ashore, thanking for gift from organisation (1986), letter from Principal of Glasgow College of Nautical Studies accepting invitation to Christmas dinner (1987), letter from Cardiff Secretary asking Glasgow to second a proposed motion to the Executive Committee (1990), copy of The British Sailor's Society Scottish News leaflet (Spring 1971), lists of past Chairmen (1944-1978) and partial letter from Hon Secretary of Glasgow branch detailing their activities.  
1 file

U DWA/2/6/2

Calendar of events for Glasgow branch

1944-2009

Includes details of branch activities such as talks from members and external speakers, whist drives, bring and buy sales and visits with contact details of committee members and locations of meetings.  
1 bundle

U DWA/2/6/3	<p>Glasgow Branch Minutes</p> <p>This is not a complete run, but mainly covers 1949-1956 and 1979-1984. It contains material related to a number of different meetings including Annual Business Meeting, Committee Meetings and Ordinary Meetings. The meetings were held most weeks in a number of venues including Stella Maris, 69 Carlton Place, Glasgow, Standing Conference Club, Sauchiehall Street, YWCA Bath Street and other addresses in Glasgow.</p> <p>Comprises mainly typed and handwritten material which includes details of fundraising activities, outings, news related to members, details of speakers, deaths of members, problems with installation of Sea Services window in Glasgow Cathedral, nominations to committee and details of meetings attended.</p> <p>1 file</p> <p><b>This item contains personal sensitive information and is not available for public inspection for 75 years until Jan 2060. This is in accordance with data protection legislation. If you have a query about access to this record please contact <a href="mailto:archives@hull.ac.uk">archives@hull.ac.uk</a>.</b></p>	1949-1984
U DWA/2/6/4	<p>Minutes of the first meeting of the Scottish Branches</p> <p>Meeting held at Taypark Hotel, Broughty Ferry, Dundee between Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow branches. Details appointment of Chairman from Glasgow branch and matters relating to membership issues and the Executive Committee.</p> <p>1 file</p>	May 1950
U DWA/2/6/5	<p>Savings Books Glasgow</p> <p>Income and Expenditure volume with income split into a number of sub-headings including 'Subscriptions', 'Donations', 'Tea collections', 'Socials etc.' and 'Miscellaneous' with a breakdown of where individual amounts were generated. Expenditure has similiar sub-headings including 'Subscriptions', 'Donations', 'Telephone, Postage, Printing', 'Socials, etc.' and 'Miscellaneous' with a breakdown where individual amounts were spent.</p> <p>1 volume</p>	1963-1978

**U DWA/2/7**

**Bristol and Avonmouth**

The Bristol and Avonmouth Branch formed in June 1944. Their first meeting was at the Grand Hotel, but an invitation from the Chairman of the Bristol Sailors' Home saw the Branch move their meetings to this new location. The Branch were able to build on the local interest in the Merchant Navy enabling them to raise funds through concerts, whist drives and dances. Their charitable donations have included the Bristol Sailors' Home, the Merchant Navy Orphanage and the Lord Mayor's Christmas Dinner Fund. The members provided aid for those in sickness and trouble, especially strangers visiting port. The 1958 history (U DWA/1/4/2) tells the story of the English wife of a Belgian Merchant Navy officer who was taken ill and had to remain in Bristol while her husband sailed. Members of the Branch looked after her and visited her regularly.

**U DWA/2/8**

**Edinburgh**

**1953-1980**

The Edinburgh branch was formed in March 1945 with 28 members and help from the Glasgow branch. Adverts were placed in 'The Scotsman' and leaflets given to people known to have relatives in the Merchant Navy. A calendar of events including outings and talks was planned and a number of topics for debate and discussion that affected the Merchant Navy were raised. These included the bad overseas letter service, supplying fresh milk to ships when in port, provision of hostels for families, permission for wives to stay on board ship when husband's ship in port and changes to pensions. In 1946 branch members were able to help Aberdeen to form a branch. Members also undertook hospital visits in Leith, Methil and Edinburgh. A wide and varied social programme helped the Branch to grow and Mr James Hoy, MP for Edinburgh, gave an address in the House of Commons describing its customs and formalities.

It would appear that the three Scottish Branches, Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow, came together for meetings. The collection includes the Minutes of their first meeting held in 1950 at Taypark Hotel, Broughty Ferry, Dundee and can be found in U DWA/2/6/4.

The material in this collection comprises calendars of events.  
1 bundle



- U DWA/2/8/1      Calendar of events for Edinburgh branch      1953-1980  
These calendars of events appear to have been collected by members of the Glasgow branch. They include details of branch activities such as talks from members and external speakers, whist drives, bring and buy sales and visits with contact details of committee members and locations of meetings (1953-1955, 1971-1974, 1979-1980).  
1 bundle
- U DWA/2/9**      **Belfast**  
The Belfast Branch was formed in 1945 and by 1958 it stood at 60 members. Their charitable works included, in particular, efforts to raise money for the Missions to Seamen. When the new Institute was built in 1956 the Branch furnished the officers' lounge in memory of their first Treasurer, Mrs Nell Carson. Many of the members also carried out voluntary work in the Mission's canteen and the King George's Fund for Sailors. The Branch ran a programme of events that included whist drives, events and outings. Minutes from the National Committees refer to problems that delegates from the Branch had in attending meetings due to the troubles.  
  
We currently hold no individual records for this branch.
- U DWA/2/10**      **Teesside**  
A meeting to gauge interest in the formation of a Teesside Branch took place in December 1945. A few weeks later 20 to 30 people took place in the inaugural meeting. The members took part in a range of social activities including whist drives, children's parties, sales and dances. June 1949 saw monthly meetings begin in Redcar.  
  
We currently hold no individual records for this branch.
- U DWA/2/11**      **Aberdeen**  
The Aberdeen branch was formed in early 1946 with assistance from members of the Edinburgh branch. In August of the same year the branch were able to find a permanent home at the YMCA. A programme of talks, functions and outings helped the branch to grow.  
  
It would appear that the three Scottish Branches, Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow, came together for meetings. The collection includes the

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Minutes of their first meeting held in 1950 at Taypark Hotel, Broughty Ferry, Dundee and can be found in U DWA/2/6/4.

We currently hold no individual records for this branch.

**U DWA/2/12**

**Humber**

**[1976]-1986**

Although some of the records in this collection indicate that there may have been a Branch in Hull as early as 1933 the Watch Ashore history written in 1958 states that it was formed January 1947 (U DWA/1/4/2). The inaugural meeting of the Humber Branch was held at the offices of the Navigators and Engineers Officers Union in Hull.

Fundraising activities, such as a whist drive and dance enabled the Branch to make a grant to the Port Chaplain in appreciation of his allowing the Branch to use a room at the Missions to Seamen for their meetings and social activities.

Membership quickly grew to 60 members with a programme of outings, concerts, whist-drives, children's Christmas parties and an Annual Dinner. Members met each week to help with sewing and mending for the Sailors' Children's Society home in Newland, Hull. Members also attended the Naval Memorial Service on board SS Wingfield Castle just outside the mouth of the Humber, took the widows from the Trinity House Rest Home for an outing and provided a Christmas party and concert for them and the residents of the Merchant Navy Hostel.

Donations were sent to the Royal Merchant Navy School and other institutions connected with the sea. In 1988 a cup, awarded to the Hull Trinity House Navigation School student giving the best service to the school, was still being given. The history of The Watch Ashore updated in 1988 (U DWA/1/4/4) describes how the members no longer wore hats and addressed each other as 'Mrs', but had become more informal and noisier. The Branch now meets in Cottingham and continues with a programme of speakers and demonstrations (2013).

1 item

U DWA/2/12/1 Meeting minute book [1976]-1986  
Handwritten minute book containing minutes of Annual General Meetings, descriptions of talks on various subjects given to the society by invited speakers, notes on coffee evenings and descriptions of events organised by the society, including Sherry Parties, the children's Christmas Party and other fundraising initiatives.  
1 item

**U DWA/2/13 Harwich and Dovercourt**  
The Committee Meeting Minutes of 1938 (U DWA/1/1/2) show that there was a member from a Branch based in Leigh-on Sea, Essex, but this Branch does not make an appearance in the histories that have been written about the Watch Ashore. It is not until 1949 that an Essex Branch appears to have come into existence with the formation of the Harwich and Dovercourt Branch. The name incorporated the residential area where most of its members resided with the name of the old seaport. The initial membership of 20 steadily grew to 40, mostly from ladies connected with the officers of British Railway steamers, Trinity House Steam Vessel Service and the North Channel Section of the Trinity House London Pilotage Service. The Branch enjoyed card parties, functions and dances, but also undertook charitable works. In 1952 members joined in the flood relief work and in 1956 raised money for the centenary year of the Missions to Seamen. A prize was given to one of the pupils of the Royal Merchant Navy School at Wokingham each year. The Branch had close links to the civic authorities with members regularly attending civic occasions.

We currently hold no individual records for this branch.

**U DWA/2/14 London**  
Before and during the Second World War there was not a constituted London Branch, but a Central London group was run by the Central Committee. Informal groups were held, at first, in Captain Coombs' flat with two or three Branches in districts around London, such as Ilford and Harrow. Due to the conditions during the war and the evacuation of many of its members the Branches had great difficulty in continuing to function. Early Minute books and papers were destroyed by enemy action. The Branch formed in February 1952 with four women meeting in a

restaurant in Fleet Street. By June membership had grown to 25 people and the Branch was officially constituted in the July. Dr Ronald Hope, offered the use of the College of the Sea, Mansbridge House, Balham. The Branch's activities included speakers, luncheons, children's parties and attendance at the Annual Service for Seafarers in St Paul's Cathedral. Their charitable works have included running the Memorial Hall Depot for King George's Fund for Sailors' flag day, two prizes each year to the Royal Merchant Navy School at Bear Wood and subscribed to the Seafarers' Education Service.

We currently hold no individual records for this branch.

**U DWA/2/15**

**Manchester and District**

The Manchester and District Branch was formed in August 1959 with five members. By January 1960 membership had increased to 18, reaching 31 in the May. Branch activities included outings, coffee mornings and visits, including to and from other Branches. Charities such as the Sailors' Children's Home and the Mission to Seamen received support from the Branch. Membership gradually declined and by 1980 meetings were being held in member's homes. In 1982 only 19 members, many of whom had belonged since the early 1960s, remained. A member of the Branch lost her son in the sinking of the 'Derbyshire' in 1980.

We currently hold no individual records for this branch.

**U DWA/2/16**

**Plymouth**

The Plymouth Branch held its inaugural meeting in early 1962. Twelve people were present at the first dinner in the Lockyer Hotel. By 1988 this had increased to between 60 and 70. Member activities have included handicraft evenings, bingo, lunches, demonstrations and garden parties. Members also visited the wives of Merchant Navy personnel in France and Denmark who belonged to organisations similar to The Watch Ashore. Charity activities have included supporting the Brixham Boys' Home and the local Missions to Seamen.

We currently hold no individual records for this branch.

**U DWA/2/17**

**Fleetwood**

In 1965 the Fleetwood Branch was formed with its membership growing to 12. The Branch name was extended to 'Fleetwood and Flyde' to draw in a wider membership. Activities have included excursions, parties and meeting with other Branches as well as fundraising for nautical charities.

We currently hold no individual records for this branch.

**U DWA/2/18**

**Burton and Derby**

The Burton and Derby Branch arose from an interview on the local BBC Radio Station in Derby in 1978. The response received led to a small Branch being formed, meeting in member's homes and supporting sea charities.

We currently hold no individual records for this branch.

**U DWA/3**

**Events and Publicity**

**1937-[2010]**

The material in this series comprises items used to promote and record activities and events run and attended by The Watch Ashore members. These include copies of speeches, photographs, menus, newspaper cuttings and accounts of events attended. Some of the material also relates to organisations and events of interest to The Watch Ashore.

Many of the photographs in this collection have photographer's stamps. Copyright will possibly be retained by these companies or individuals.  
7 files, 2 bundles and 1 volume

**U DWA/3/1**

Report of informal reception at Strathcona Room, Beaver Hall

**Mar 1937**

Details reception held for ladies accompanying Officers attending AGM of The Navigators & Engineer Officers Union. Members of The Watch Ashore were present and Mrs Nelson-Ward, President, addressed the meeting. Details some of the successes that the organisation had achieved and their future plans.  
1 file

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- |           |  |               |
|-----------|--|---------------|
| U DWA/3/2 | <p>Photocopies of photographs<br/>Images appear to have been collected by members of the Glasgow branch. They are mostly labelled and include events and outings [1940s-1960s] and Shirley McColl's wedding [1950].<br/>1 file</p>   | [1940s-1960s] |
| U DWA/3/3 | <p>The Lady Headley Speech<br/>Handwritten speech given in Edinburgh in which she states that it is a great privilege to have been chosen as President of The Watch Ashore and includes details of the organisation's history, present activities and future plans.<br/>1 file</p>   | 1945          |
| U DWA/3/4 | <p>Menus for The Watch Ashore Dinners<br/>It would appear that these menus were collected by members of the Glasgow branch. Venues include London, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Southampton, Hull, Dovercourt, Cleveleys, Liverpool, Plymouth, Manchester and Cardiff. Includes menus for a range of events including Annual and Golden Jubilee Dinners and various branch dinners including Glasgow's 21st Birthday (1965) and Christmas (1988), Edinburgh's 21st Birthday (1966), Plymouth's 20th Birthday (1982).<br/><br/>Shows details of menu, toasts and entertainment. Some contain contact information and signatures of those attending, including Winston S Churchill, MP (1979).<br/>1 bundle<br/><b>This item contains personal sensitive information and is not available for public inspection for 75 years until Jan 2065. This is in accordance with data protection legislation. If you have a query about access to this record please contact <a href="mailto:archives@hull.ac.uk">archives@hull.ac.uk</a>.</b></p> | 1957-1989     |
| U DWA/3/5 | <p>Photographs, postcard and newspaper cuttings<br/>Material appears to have been collected from various sources, but much of it would seem to originate from the Glasgow branch members. Mostly unnamed photographs of various events including Glasgow branch visit to Lady Headley's (1950), Jubilee Celebrations (1958), Glasgow dinner (17 March 1965), Royal visit by Princess Anne (1969), Mansion House Luncheon with Dame Anna Neagle (October 1969), Edinburgh Silver Jubilee Dinner (23 March 1970), Hull Triennial (June 1970), Plymouth Triennial (1976). Also includes letter from photographer, John</p>  | 1950-1976     |

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Bardsley, concerning an order for prints.

Also contains newspaper cuttings related to Plymouth Triennial conference (May 1976), 21st anniversary of Southampton branch [1970] and British Ship Adoption Society (December 1968), magazine cutting showing 33rd Annual Dinner (1967) postcard sent from Duke of Cornwall Hotel, Plymouth (1967).

Many of the photographs in this collection have photographer's stamps. Copyright will possibly be retained by these companies or individuals.

1 file

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|-----------|---|-------------|
| U DWA/3/6 | <p>Firsthand account of the wedding of HRH Princess Margaret and Mr Anthony Armstrong-Jones</p> <p>Written by Mrs KL Allen, President of Harwich and Dovercourt branch of The Watch Ashore.</p> <p>1 file</p>   | May 1960    |
| U DWA/3/7 | <p>Seafaring Services and Memorials</p> <p>Three programmes for Annual National Service for Seafarers at St Paul's Cathedral, London, includes ticket for 1963 service (October 1963, October 1965, October 1968) and programme from Westminster Abbey for 'A Special Service for Men of the Sea' (July 1966). All include details of the services held including hymns, prayers and readings.</p> <p>Also includes The Watch Ashore Prayer, notice from British Maritime Charitable Foundation announcing a Memorial Book [1987], item from Sea Breezes shipping magazine about Scottish Merchant Navy Memorial at Leith [2010], Order of Service for The Watch Ashore's Annual Service at the Headquarters of The Missions to Seamen, London (April 1974), Poem 'Seafarers' Wives' by Ruth Poole (nd)</p> <p>1 file</p> | 1963-[2010] |
| U DWA/3/8 | <p>Tickets for various events and functions.</p> <p>It would appear that these tickets were collected by members of the Glasgow branch. Venues include London, Glasgow, Willerby, East Yorkshire, Hull, Liverpool, Plymouth, Manchester and York.</p> <p>They are for a range of events including Annual and Celebratory Dinners, Civic Receptions,</p>   | 1964-1997   |

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Mansion House Luncheon (1969) and Afternoon Tea (1977), Women of the Year Luncheon (1979), opening of the Marine Society, Thanksgiving service to mark 125th anniversary of The Missions to Seamen (1981), merchant Navy World War II Service of Commemoration and Thanksgiving (1995).

Many of the invitations are named and some contain contact details.

1 bundle

**This item contains personal sensitive information and is not available for public inspection for 75 years until Jan 2073. This is in accordance with data protection legislation. If you have a query about access to this record please contact [archives@hull.ac.uk](mailto:archives@hull.ac.uk).**

U DWA/3/9	<p>Album with newspaper cuttings and photographs</p> <p>Undated newspaper cuttings mainly detailing branch news. They appear to have been taken from 'The Telegraph', the newspaper of The National Union of Marine, Aviation and Shipping Transport Officers [1980s]. The photographs are unnamed, but appear to show groups of members at various events and functions. Those labelled include Cardiff Golden Jubilee (1983), Ruby Dinner (1984), Peggy Clayton's 80th Birthday (1985) and Christmas Dinner in Albany Hotel, Glasgow (1985).</p> <p>Some of the photographs in this collection have photographer's stamps. Copyright will possibly be retained by these companies or individuals.</p> <p>1 volume</p>	1980s
U DWA/3/10	<p>Material related to National Union of Marine, Aviation and Shipping Transport Officers (NUMAST)</p> <p>Includes copies of 'The Telegraph', newspaper of NUMAST (May 1987-May 1988). Also undated leaflet advertising Watch Ashore and NUMAST working together in the Sea Sense campaign. This was a national initiative to raise public and political awareness of the Merchant Navy.</p> <p>1 file</p>	1987-[2005]
U DWA/4	<p><b>Correspondence</b></p> <p>This artificial collection of correspondence is items found throughout the Collection and sorted chronologically.</p> <p>4 files</p>	1933-2002



U DWA/4/1

Correspondence

1933-2002

This artificial collection of correspondence is items found throughout the Collection and are sorted chronologically.

It contains letters from a number of sources including: Merchant Navy Welfare Board explaining the sale of the Merchant Navy Hotel and mentioning Watch Ashore Medals that they hold; solicitor detailing legacy, from various Honourable General Secretaries to all branch secretaries including the National Chairman's resignation, details of memorial service for Lady Headley and organisational matters including retirement of Dorothy Cookson; letter from Royal Merchant Navy School Foundation asking to raise awareness of them with The Watch Ashore's members, invitation to Merchant Navy World War II Service of Commemoration and Thanksgiving (1995); letter from Royal Merchant Navy School Foundation asking for funding (Oct 1997); The Missions to Seamen thanking Watch Ashore for their donation (June 1997); Department of Transport stating that a Formal Investigation into the sinking of the Derbyshire was not going to be held and correspondence between Watch Ashore officers detailing the closure of the Harwich and Dovercourt branch and where the branch badge will be stored.

1 file

**This item contains personal sensitive information and is not available for public inspection for 75 years until Jan 2078. This is in accordance with data protection legislation. If you have a query about access to this record please contact [archives@hull.ac.uk](mailto:archives@hull.ac.uk).**

U DWA/4/2

Correspondence relating to the Triennial meeting at Glasgow, 1981, including letters relating to guests, speakers and nominations for the committee

1981

1 file

**This item contains personal sensitive information and is not available for public inspection for 75 years until Jan 2057. This is in accordance with data protection legislation. If you have a query about access to this record please contact [archives@hull.ac.uk](mailto:archives@hull.ac.uk).**

U DWA/4/3	<p>Correspondence relating to the Triennial meeting at Hull, 1988, including letters relating to guests and speakers 1 file</p> <p><b>This item contains personal sensitive information and is not available for public inspection for 75 years until Jan 2064. This is in accordance with data protection legislation. If you have a query about access to this record please contact <a href="mailto:archives@hull.ac.uk">archives@hull.ac.uk</a>.</b></p>	1987-1988
U DWA/4/4	<p>Correspondence relating to the Triennial meeting at Glasgow, 1994, including letters relating to guests, speakers and nominations for the committee 1 file</p> <p><b>This item contains personal sensitive information and is not available for public inspection for 75 years until Jan 2070. This is in accordance with data protection legislation. If you have a query about access to this record please contact <a href="mailto:archives@hull.ac.uk">archives@hull.ac.uk</a>.</b></p>	1994