

# Royal Docks Stories

*(An Oral Stories Project)*

**Frederick Albert Winsor**, originally **Friedrich Albrecht Winzer** (1763, Braunschweig, Germany – May 11, 1830, Paris) was a German inventor, one of the pioneers of gas lighting in the UK and France.



Winsor went to Britain before 1799 and became interested in the technology and economics of fuels. In 1802 he went to Paris to investigate the 'thermo-lamp' which French engineer Philippe Lebon had patented in 1799. Returning to Britain, he started a gasworks and in 1807 lit one side of Pall Mall, London, with gas lamps. In 1804-09 he was granted various patents for gas furnaces and purifiers.

He died in Paris and was buried in Père Lachaise Cemetery. A green plaque on Pall Mall in London marks the site of Winsor's first demonstration, and there is a memorial to him in Kensal Green cemetery. Winsor Terrace in Beckton, the former approach road to Beckton Gas Works and Winsor Primary School are named in his honour.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frederick\\_Albert\\_Winsor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frederick_Albert_Winsor)

info@irokotheatre.org.uk  
www.irokotheatre.org.uk  
© IROKO Theatre Company 2014/ RDS



# Royal Docks Stories

(An Oral Stories Project)

## Ellen Wilkinson

Ellen Wilkinson (1881-1947) was a feminist, a suffragette and twice elected MP. She was appointed as the first woman Minister of Education in Britain, under her influence, parliament adopted the 1946 School Milk Act, giving free milk to all school children.



Wilkinson became known as Red Ellen (both for the colour of her hair and her politics). Active in the 1926 General Strike, afterwards she was co-author with Frank Horrabin and Raymond Postgate of The Workers History of the Great Strike (1927).

# Royal Docks Stories

(An Oral Stories Project)

## World War II

*‘When people say, “I wasn’t frightened,” they’re not telling the truth. Everybody was scared stiff, I’m sure. But you didn’t know.*



*You didn’t show it to anybody. If you were frightened you just kept yourself together. All through the war I never saw anybody cry, except*

*one woman who just couldn’t cope with the damage and the noise.’*

**– Joan Plant**

info@irokothatre.org.uk  
www.irokothatre.org.uk  
© IROKO Theatre Company 2014/ RDS



# Royal Docks Stories

(An Oral Stories Project)

## Tate & Lyle

In 1921 Henry Tate & Sons and Abram Lyle & Sons merged to become Tate & Lyle, the largest cane sugar brand in the United Kingdom. The merger allowed them to compete with the emerging foreign market. Despite competition over granulated sugar, each firm maintained its speciality: Tate's sugar cubes and Lyle's golden syrup.



Most of their produce now enters the EU marketplace. Tate & Lyle is the market leader in glucose-fructose syrup production in Europe. More than half the continent's syrup is used for beverage applications.



*'It was cane sugar and then the sugar was then boiled. There were different grades of sugar, the white granulated sugar and then the very heavy black treacle that is used in cooking. They set up here in Plaistow in the 1880s.'* – **Cllr. Alec Kellaway**

info@irokotheatre.org.uk  
www.irokotheatre.org.uk  
© IROKO Theatre Company 2014/ RDS

Newham London



# Royal Docks Stories

*(An Oral Stories Project)*

## THE ROYAL DOCKS

The Royal Docks comprise three docks in east London - the Royal Albert Dock the Royal Victoria Dock and the King George V Dock built between 1880 and 1921 on riverside marshes in the London borough of Newham. The three docks collectively formed



the largest enclosed docks in the world with a water area of nearly 250 acres and an overall estate of 1100 acres.

Constructed to provide berths for large vessels that could not be accommodated further upriver, The Royal Docks were finally closed for shipping in 1981. The closure brought hardship to Silvertown and the local area. With numerous dockside residential and office developments under construction, the future looks brighter

**Source:**

<http://www.royaldocks.net/>

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal\\_Docks](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Docks)

info@irokotheatre.org.uk  
www.irokotheatre.org.uk  
© IROKO Theatre Company 2014/ RDS

Newham London



# Royal Docks Stories

(An Oral Stories Project)

## Off To See The World

This photograph shows a liner in King George V Dock, Saville Road, Silvertown in 1950.

Ships like this took Britons to begin new lives in all corners of the world.



These journeys often started on the “boat train” to the docks and Gallions Hotel. To ease travel, the entrance to the hotel was on the platform and after their stay passengers boarded their liners via a tunnel to the docks. Rudyard Kipling cites the hotel in *The Light that Failed* (1890): “*Is it Tilbury and a tender, or Gallions and the docks?*”

Source:  
Royal Docks Heritage Report, Part 1.  
[www.newhamstory.com](http://www.newhamstory.com)  
<http://hidden-london.com/gazetteer/gallions-reach/>

[info@irokothatre.org.uk](mailto:info@irokothatre.org.uk)  
[www.irokothatre.org.uk](http://www.irokothatre.org.uk)  
© IROKO Theatre Company 2014/ RDS

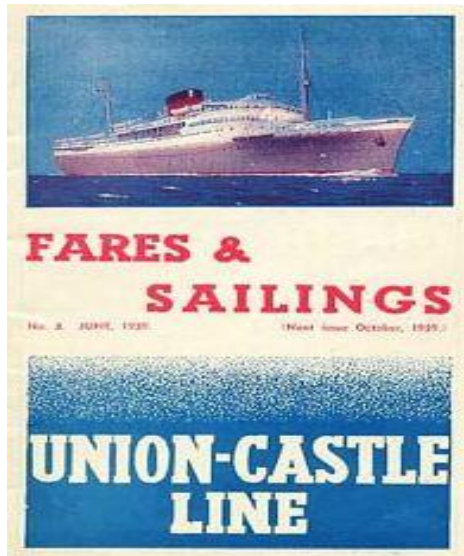


# Royal Docks Stories

(An Oral Stories Project)

## To Africa

In 1952, Donald Barton took the boat train to King George V Dock for a new life in Tanganyika, Africa. As he stood by the Tate & Lyle factory he saw:



*“A street of Victorian shop fronts and cottages, on one side was a pub with prominent cornice, round doors and windows. Two hundred yards to the rear, and parallel to the main road was the dock boundary, and sandwiched in between were terraces of artisans and dockworkers houses – the older ones of mellowed yellow brick, Edwardian ones grimy red, a little grander, with bay windows.”*

*Beyond a long low brick warehouse with a serrated roof was a row of perhaps a dozen cranes, and more important the top half of my Dunnottar Castle... It seemed ironic my last contact with England should be with this dockland village, as alien in a way as any huddle of huts I might encounter in East Africa.”*

The Dunnottar Castle sailed via Marseilles, Genoa, Port Suez, Aden, Mombasa, Zanzibar, Dar Es Salaam, Biera, Durban, Port Elizabeth, Cape Town – and returned to London via the Canary Islands.

**Source:**

*An Affair with Africa - Tanganyika Remembered*, Barton (2004), p.7  
<http://www.lastoceanliners.com/cgi/lolline.pl?UCL>

info@irokotheatre.org.uk  
www.irokotheatre.org.uk  
© IROKO Theatre Company 2014/ RDS



# Royal Docks Stories

(An Oral Stories Project)

## To Australia



In 1947, Australia had relatively few people and Britain was in post-war hardship. To encourage settlers the Australian and British government offered a £10 fare to Australia (a tenth of the real cost). P&O took up contracts and advertised this scheme from 1948-1953 and in 1948:

*“The Maloja at the Royal Albert Dock is being refitted to take settlers to Australia. Together with the Randhi, Chitral and Mooltan, she will take 3700 immigrants under the Commonwealth's settlement scheme.”*

In Australia, it was reported the migrants would bring new vitality, that:

*Australian children would gain a wider outlook and a better understanding of people in other countries. They will learn that the world is a big place, and that Australia is not the only country in it.”*

Source:

<http://www.poheritage.com/news/new-online-exhibition-ten-pound-poms>

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/99042743?searchTerm=maloja%20royal%20albert%20dock&searchLimits=>

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/36692650>

info@irokotheatre.org.uk

www.irokotheatre.org.uk

© IROKO Theatre Company 2014/ RDS





# Royal Docks Stories

(An Oral Stories Project)

## Stowaways

### 15 Stowaways On Banana Boat

LONDON, Thurs. (A.A.P.).—  
Ship's officers found 15 stow-  
aways in the lamp locker of  
the 5,464-ton banana boat  
Jamaica Producer when she ar-  
rived at the Royal Albert Dock  
early yesterday.

Sometimes the ships carried extra cargo, such as this news in 1954. Of these, 12 were sent to prison for 21 days. The other three were not allowed to land.

Source:

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/27215343?searchTerm=stowaway>  
Ottawa Citizen August 19, 1955

info@irokothatre.org.uk  
www.irokothatre.org.uk  
© IROKO Theatre Company 2014/ RDS

Newham London



# Royal Docks Stories

(An Oral Stories Project)

## Film Sets

The London docks were the inspiration, setting and film location for British films. These films not only capture the working docks, they show what the docks represented in the imagination of the time.

“The Crimson Circle”, (1936) shows the battle between Scotland Yard and the Crimson Circle, a secret society of blackmailers. A reporter visited it on location, and found a striking scene:



*“Down on the London docks one foggy night recently there assembled a collection of Chinese, lascars, waterside "rats," rougs and toughs. When I got to St. Katherine's Dock I was sure a riot was in the offing. London "bobbies" seemed to be everywhere, but most were "extras".*

Pool of London” (1951) shows the crew of the *Dunbar* on shore leave in London, involved in smuggling and petty crime. This review of its opening described it as:

*“A dynamic story of the Thames Underworld and the smuggling operations when ships arrive and depart at the Pool of London”*

Source:

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/51191880>

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/printArticle>

info@irokotheatre.org.uk

www.irokotheatre.org.uk

© IROKO Theatre Company 2014/ RDS



# Royal Docks Stories

(An Oral Stories Project)

## BULL FROM KING'S STUD BOUGHT FOR AUSTRALIA.

LONDON, April 1.  
Mr. J. M. Smith, M.L.A., Western Australia, has bought the Red Poll bull *Royal Antonio* from the King's stud at Sandringham, one of the best Red Polls bred by his Majesty. The bull will be shipped to Fremantle in May, and taken to Mr. Smith's own station.

The Royal Docks also saw animals off to start new lives in Australia. To ensure good stock, pedigree horses, cows and sheep sailed to Australia after being selected by breeders while in England. They were vital to improve the quality of breeding animals.

Some came from royal beginnings. In 1950 the SS *Persic* set off from the London docks with cattle, sheep and horses to Australia.

Source:

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/32862821>

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/article/117401767>

info@irokotheatre.org.uk  
www.irokotheatre.org.uk  
© IROKO Theatre Company 2014/ RDS

Newham London



# Royal Docks Stories

(An Oral Stories Project)

*'The Dockies had their own ways, and their own language to a large extent, their own meanings. They'd come out all together and have time off. We'd know when the work was safe and when it wasn't. There were very bad days for working in the docks. We could stand in the upstairs window of our house and look down towards the bottom where quite often the ganger would call the men for work and there would be a big crowd and he'd just pick one or two.'*

**– Joan Plant**

*'You was casual labour and you would only get four hours work. They'd get eight hours work out of you in four hours. You'd be exhausted and then you would take another shift on. Really, you was half pay. You might get a reasonable hourly rate compared to others but you could only really do four hours and then you're gone and another group had another go... Therefore there was a tradition of not having enough money, not having enough food and then you steal.'*

**– David Mace**

info@irokotheatre.org.uk  
www.irokotheatre.org.uk  
© IROKO Theatre Company 2014/ RDS



# Royal Docks Stories

*(An Oral Stories Project)*

*'I looked after a man named Sandy who used to be in charge of the ships and he worked many years there too. He used to get very upset when the ships were going out and he wasn't part of it. So lots and lots of Eastenders and the Dockies were very nice people. Very generous people too. If somebody passed away there was always a collection for that individual person.'*

**– Sheila Campbell**

info@irokotheatre.org.uk  
www.irokotheatre.org.uk  
© IROKO Theatre Company 2014/ RDS



# Royal Docks Stories

(An Oral Stories Project)

*'There were so many strikes it meant that if a banana boat was coming in the cargo couldn't be downloaded. I know at one point they were on strike for six weeks. And when you've got perishable goods the owners wouldn't bring them in any more. They'd take them to the docks at Southampton or across to Rotterdam.'*

**– Joan Plant**

*'I saw this chap ... He was crying his eyes out. So I went and put my arm on his shoulder, 'What's wrong?' He says, 'We've only just got back to work and the union wants us to strike again. We can't, we need to feed our kiddies.' I felt so sorry, he was really crying. I had a few pounds, I took it out and gave it to him.'*

**– Margaret Murnaghan**

info@irokothatre.org.uk  
www.irokotheatre.org.uk  
© IROKO Theatre Company 2014/ RDS



# Royal Docks Stories

## (An Oral Stories Project)

*'They started getting big tankers and containers, which the docks couldn't take as the gates wouldn't let them in. The ships we had, they gradually finished. In fact all the shipping companies gradually finished and in the end, well you know what the docks are like now. The docks closed down and literally everybody in the area knew or worked in the docks. Nobody seemed to moan about it. You never see much about it in the papers. ...Nobody seemed to care. Nobody mentioned it on the television or the wireless.'* –



**Eileen Frost**

*'I was very sorry because many of the people I was looking after used to work on the docklands. There was this lady and she used to have a butchers. When she died she left in her will that she wanted her ashes thrown over the docklands.'* – **Sheila Campbell**

*'For a long time we felt we wanted our old docks back with the beautiful ships that came in. Enormous ships they were. Liners really and they travelled all over the world and as children we got a great deal of information. You learned a lot. You got to recognise the flags of the different countries.'*

**– Joan Plant**

info@irokotheatre.org.uk  
www.irokotheatre.org.uk  
© IROKO Theatre Company 2014/ RDS

Newham London



# Royal Docks Stories

*(An Oral Stories Project)*

## **Imps Motorcycle Team**

The Imps Motorcycle Display Team, noted for its impeccable smart red tunics and highly disciplined spectacular show, originated in the 1970's from The Hackney Adventure Holiday Project – a charity founded by Roy Pratt MBE that provided



holidays in the country for under privileged young people. Some of the children found a dysfunctional old 'motorbike' – one thing led to another and a motorcycle display team, uniquely comprising young people aged six to sixteen, emerged.

The 'IMPS' is dedicated to educating children through, though not exclusively, their leisure time activities, this is delivered by a disciplined, dynamic and challenging programme of activities with a world-famous motorcycle display team at its heart.

Source:  
<http://www.impsonline.com>

info@irokotheatre.org.uk  
www.irokotheatre.org.uk  
© IROKO Theatre Company 2014/ RDS





# Royal Docks Stories

*(An Oral Stories Project)*

## **Sunborn Princess Yacht (proposed hotel)**

Newham Council planners have approved proposals for the 120 metre, 140-cabin Sunborn Princess Upgrade to be moored west of the ExCeL Centre, next to the Royal Victoria Square, for the next 15 years. Permission was granted to Sunborn International by councillors at a meeting of Newham Council's Strategic Development Committee on Tuesday (October 15). As part of this permission, the council's job brokerage service Workplace will be used.

The plans allow for an outdoor Jacuzzi, bar and sunlounge on one of the decks. In addition, 65 parking spaces will be provided at undercroft level of ExCeL.



<http://www.newhamrecorder.co.uk>

info@irokotheatre.org.uk  
www.irokotheatre.org.uk  
© IROKO Theatre Company 2014/ RDS



# Royal Docks Stories

(An Oral Stories Project)

## ExCel Centre

ExCeL Centre is an exhibitions and international convention centre located on a 100-acre site on the northern quay of the Royal Victoria Dock in London Docklands, between Canary Wharf and London City Airport. It is the host venue for a variety of events from award winning exhibitions and conferences to international association meetings, product launches, banquets, award ceremonies, sporting events, concerts, weddings and religious events.



The centre was built by Sir Robert McAlpine and first opened in November 2000. In May 2008, it was acquired by Abu Dhabi National Exhibitions Company. For the 2012 Summer Olympics, ExCeL London was divided into five sports halls with capacities ranging from 6,000 to 10,000 that were used for boxing, fencing, judo, taekwondo, table tennis, weightlifting, and wrestling.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ExCeL\\_London](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ExCeL_London)  
<http://www.excel-london.co.uk>

info@irokotheatre.org.uk  
www.irokotheatre.org.uk  
© IROKO Theatre Company 2014/ RDS



# Royal Docks Stories

*(An Oral Stories Project)*

## London City Airport

London City Airport is located on a former Docklands site in the London Borough of Newham. It is a short distance from both the City of London and Canary Wharf, two major users of the airport.



The airport was first proposed in 1981 by Reg Ward, who was Chief Executive of the newly formed London Docklands Development Corporation (LDDC) that was responsible for the regeneration of the

area.

In early 2013 work started on a £15m investment programme to refurbish the western pier with new departure gates and improved lounges, as well as to redevelop the international arrivals hall and baggage handling areas. The airport also has outlined their vision for growth up to 2030. The plan shows an expansion of the airport to a maximum capacity of eight million passengers per annum, without the addition of a second runway, or significant expansion of the airport boundaries.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/London\\_City\\_Airport](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/London_City_Airport)

info@irokothatre.org.uk  
www.irokotheatre.org.uk  
© IROKO Theatre Company 2014/ RDS



# Royal Docks Stories

*(An Oral Stories Project)*

## Thames Barrier

The barrier, built in 1982 on the Thames on the eastern side of the capital at Woolwich, was designed to protect 48 sq miles (125 sq km) of central London from flooding caused by tidal surges.



At the moment, with so much rainfall travelling down the Thames, there is a danger during high tide that the extra water will be pushed back up river by the sea and cause flooding in the capital and

to the west.

With no barrier, at high tide, the sea would normally flow up the estuary and into London, pushing the river water back. With all the extra rainfall, this could worsen the flooding. The barrier prevents this from happening.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-26133660>  
[www.architravel.com](http://www.architravel.com)

[info@irokothatre.org.uk](mailto:info@irokothatre.org.uk)  
[www.irokothatre.org.uk](http://www.irokothatre.org.uk)  
© IROKO Theatre Company 2014/ RDS



# Royal Docks Stories

(An Oral Stories Project)

*'If you were living in Newham forty years ago, I definitely wouldn't be able to get you tilapia or West Indian fish. Nor would I have heard of Jellof rice, but I can take you today and buy you yam and African fish and cowfoot. All these dishes from all over the world, I can now buy them for you in Newham. But I couldn't forty years ago. It's fantastic.'*

**- Cllr. Alec Kellaway**

# Royal Docks Stories

(An Oral Stories Project)

*‘Beckton remains a quite diverse community, even more diverse than the rest of Newham. As it’s new housing, it always has always had a bit of a different feel. People like living there because it is quite green with open spaces. It’s a bit quieter than urban Newham.’*

**-Cllr. David Christie**

info@irokotheatre.org.uk  
www.irokotheatre.org.uk  
© IROKO Theatre Company 2014/ RDS



# Royal Docks Stories

(An Oral Stories Project)

*‘There are amazing opportunities for young people in Newham. It is not always easy, but there are loads of opportunities. Whilst you have the chance, take advantage of them and succeed.’*

**-Cllr. David Christie**

*‘You may not reach all of your dreams, but you may exceed many of your dreams.*

*Young people should dream and aim very high. They should strive very hard and be very ambitious. God bless them all.’*

**- Cllr. Alec Kellaway**

# Royal Docks Stories

(An Oral Stories Project)

*'Be true to what you've been brought up with, listen to what other people say even though you think you know better, help one another, be concerned about other people. Everyone no matter if they are poorer than you are, maybe in a wheelchair, maybe mentally disturbed, show them respect, because in lots of cases it is only something very small that will make you like them.'*

**– Joan Plant**

info@irokotheatre.org.uk  
www.irokotheatre.org.uk  
© IROKO Theatre Company 2014/ RDS





# Royal Docks Stories

*(An Oral Stories Project)*

## Interview with Glen Toonga by Abigail Jankoic



**Glen Toonga is a former student of The Royal Docks Community School and is currently at University studying Maths and Further Maths. In the 2012 Olympics, Glen was privileged to support Usain Bolt – indeed he wished him luck just before the 200M race that he won.**

### **1. How did you get along with your friends and education in KS3?**

“I was not very good in KS3 I had troubles with finding out who my real friends were. I was not very interested in learning, I was not sure of what I want to do after school and college. I did what I thought was cool.”

### **2. How did you get along with your friend and education in KS4?**

“In KS4 I realised I didn’t want to be not successful. I knew that I had to get my GCSEs.”

info@irokothatre.org.uk  
www.irokothatre.org.uk  
© IROKO Theatre Company 2014/ RDS



# Royal Docks Stories

## (An Oral Stories Project)

### 3. What made you change your mind to become more successful?

“I wanted to do better and I knew that if I want to do better I had to be better”

### 4. Did you leave school with good grades?

“Yes, and I was really happy at first. In my mock exams I used to get E’s, but then I pushed myself to get better grades.”

### 5. Did the grades you got help you after you left school?

“Yes they helped me get into to good sixth form, I looked into banking and they asked for my grades and they said I was really good because I got A\*s and As. The grades made my life easier.”

### 6. What are you studying in your university at this moment, and did school help you?

“While I was in KS4 I really started to like Maths and I even picked statistic for my GSCE options. That’s what I decided to do on my university.”

### 7. Tell us everything you thought of Olympics and what part did you take there?

“I got used to it, everyone makes it a big deal, and I guess it was. The way I see it is it got me successful it encouraged me.”

### 8. How did you get to Olympics and how did it help you with where you are now?

“My friends and I wanted to take part in Olympics so we went for an interview and what they did is they interviewed your group skills and how you work as a team. We got the place and we kind of had experience what it’s like to be athletes: we did training and worked with different athletes. The Olympics were AMAZING. I had my 15 minutes of fame. People recognise me on streets sometimes, it was worth it. ”

info@irokotheatre.org.uk  
www.irokotheatre.org.uk  
© IROKO Theatre Company 2014/ RDS

