



PRESS RELEASE

Turks' collection of classic boats up for auction

Unique auction offers chance-in-a-lifetime opportunity

FEBRUARY 2010: Apex Auctions is pleased to announce the arrival at market of an extremely unusual online auction. For sale on 14 April 2010 will be the UK's most unique and diverse collection of traditional boats. Up to 200 individual boats and floating craft, currently housed at Chatham's Historic Dockyard in Kent, will be attracting the attention of anyone with an interest in conventional river-faring vessels that range enormously in shape, size and age.

The collection is the property of the well known river family Turks of Kingston. Although core business at the company today revolves around the hire of traditional and modern vessels for up to 150 guests as part of private or corporate entertainment packages, Turks' history is very much associated with boatbuilding. In fact, the company can be traced back to 1710 when it was established by Richard Turk; although records of Turk-built boats extend back to the 12th Century. Initially, Turks' focus was primarily on building passenger wherries and fishing punts, but reputation soon spread and the company expanded into making boats for English and foreign royalty and exporting pleasure craft – especially touring canoes and skiffs – all over the world.

A turn in the company's revenue stream arrived in the 1950s, when Turk Film Services was launched to provide a service covering every aspect of marine activity to the film and television industry. With a number of studios based locally in southwest London – including Pinewood, Shepperton and Bray – take-up was swift. Initially the company provided props such as telescopes, chronometers and even captain's hats, but as the media of film and television rapidly grew, so did demand for marine-related supplies, which soon extended to the provision of boats as well as the construction or adaptation of replicas, the supply of camera boats and pontoons, and even the building of jetties and docks.

As a result, Turk Film Services now own in excess of 300 period boats ranging from a 150 ft replica frigate, royal barges, gigs, skiffs, Viking longboats, ship's lifeboats and Gondolas, through to dug-out

canoes from the Cameroon, Coracles and rowing boats. Over the years, Turks' vessels have appeared on cinema screens in timeless classics such as 633 Squadron, Three Men in a Boat and Half a Sixpence, through to recent productions of the Harry Potter series and Guy Ritchie's Sherlock Holmes movie. However, the past decade has seen the advent of CGI (computer generated imagery), a software phenomenon that's usurped the use of traditional props on many film productions. Although sad, the success of the ongoing business in alternative revenue streams means the time is right to bid the period boat collection a fond farewell. The moment is particularly poignant for Michael Turk, father of the company's present managing director Richard Daniel Turk, who built and nurtured the film services side of the business.

"I will be sad to see it go, but now is the right time in the interests of the company," he says. "The film and television industry has moved on and we have been successful in focussing our commercial interests elsewhere."

Among the many historic vessels included in the auction is everything from three 50ft Viking ships and aluminium work boats for clearing weed from fishing lakes, through to small coracles and canoes. There is even an 1873-built steam launch!

While the choice vessels will probably go to regular river users, the collection is expected to attract the attention of a wide range of investors. From collectors and enthusiasts through to others who might want a unique ornament or focal point for their hotel foyer or private garden/lake. Thames-based people living on the riverside might like to search for a suitable skiff, while folk from Oxford or Cambridge might jump at the chance to own their own punt! According to Michael Turk, many of the boats would make imaginative playthings for children.

"We have up to 40 dinghy's ranging from 4ft 6" up to 8ft in length, many in as-new condition that would make fantastic garden objects of fun for children," he says.

The online auction takes place on 14 April 2010 with viewing available on 12-13 April. For more information, pictures, videos and to place bids please go to www.turksauction.com .

For further information www.turksauction.com