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Chatham Dockyard — a living museum

In the days of sail, a Royal Naval dockyard would make 35 miles of rope to rig a man-of-war.
The ropehouse at Chatham is an exceptionally fine example of the buildings in which the complicated processes of rope making were carried out. The machinery, dating from 1811, is in full working order and the ropehouse containing it is nearly a third of a mile long and has 100 windows.
Buildings like these make Chatham Dockyard a living museum, writes Philip MacDougall in his fascinating and illustrated article in the December issue of the magazine *Coast & Country*, which publishes some unusual pictures of the interior of the ropehouse taken as women worked there at the turn of the century.
The author reveals that the drab walls of the dockyard conceal an area of outstanding historic interest, much of which is firmly closed to the casual visitor.
John Dickens, the father of Charles, the author, worked in the cashier's office, built during the reign of George III.
The article is just one of a number appealing to all reader interests in this magazine, which combines the salty tang of the sea with the fresh air of the countryside.
Subject titles include "The Mysterious Ley Lines," "Army with Banners," "Reds and Rescue," "Someone is Sinking Today," "The Thames/Rhine Freight Express," "Brands From the Burning," "Support for Waterways," "Saving Old Ships" and "We Wish You a Muddy Christmas."
There are also book reviews and special features by the editorial staff.

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ENTERTAINMENTS

All-star cast tackles Maclean's suspense-filled drama

DEATH AND INTRIGUE ON THE FROZEN ISLE

Films by
Jo Fletcher

DONALD Sutherland, Vanessa Redgrave, Richard Widmark and Christopher Lee are just a few of the stars featured in the action-packed film "Bear Island," (A) showing at local cinemas next week.

Based on the novel by Alistair Maclean, the film starts with an unusual killing and maintains the suspense throughout.

The plot involves a team of United Nations scientists who arrive on Bear Island, in the Arctic, to research global weather.

Blizzard

Unaware that one of the advance party has already been brutally disposed of, the scientists are told radio contact with the home base is forbidden, except in a dire emergency.

But there seems to be some



Commander Willard Decker (Stephen Collins), Captain Kirk (William Shatner) and Scotty (James Doohan) discuss tactics against the unknown enemy.

confusion over what constitutes an emergency as, one by one, members of the team are bumped off in all manner of unbelievable "accidents."

Snow-mobile chases, bliz-

zards and avalanches are portrayed through marvelous special effects which complement the continuous action.

The characters in this com-

plex thriller are sometimes less than convincing, as they handle sophisticated equipment with casual ease and take the incredible locations for granted.

But it is still a fine escapist movie.

"Bear Island" is playing at the OXFORD in Whitstable, the ODEON in Canterbury and Heme Bay's CLASSIC from Sunday.

Meanwhile, "Star Trek — The Motion Picture" (U) is still doing big business at the A.B.C. in Canterbury.

Although special effects have lost some of their wonder since science fantasy films became the rage, those in "Star Trek" are among the finest.

Crew

William Shatner returns as the intrepid Captain James T. Kirk, in command of the Starship Enterprise.

Other familiar faces Leonard Nimoy, DeForest Kelley and James Doohan are there, together with the rest of the crew.

Films coming up in the near future include the hilarious Dracula spoof "Love at First Bite," starring the debonair George Hamilton (complete with Bela Lugosi accent and Susan Saint James as his lady love).

"Meteor," a science fiction disaster film is also ready to descend.

Famous panto has all the ingredients

ESCAPER WHO CUT CHANCES

WIDOW Twankey, the best known panto dame of all, holds the stage in "Aladdin," this year's pantomime by the Marlows Theatre, Canterbury.

In keeping with that strange pantomime tradition the dame is played by a man while the widow's son and hero of the story, Aladdin, is played by a leggy young lady.

Set in China, it is a story which is well known in any setting — the humble lad who falls in love and finally wins the rich young girl.

Poverty is not the only cross Aladdin (Sandra Berkin) has to bear in his quest — his mother and uncle are a liability to say the least.



But Widow Twankey (Ted Gatty) and her brother Wishee-Washee (Peter Aubrey) supply the essential comedy in the panto.

Aladdin's love is no less than Princess Balroubadour (Helena Breck), the daughter of the Emperor of China (Roger Martin). Of course, the Emperor has his own ideas about the match, but his objections fall beside Aladdin's trials later in the panto.

Masterminding the omens is Abenazar (Niven Boyd), the wicked magician — the kind of chap who haunts all the best oriental-cum-middle-eastern tales.

Draft names abound in the production — how about two Chinese policemen, P.C. Ping



An outside problem for Wishee-Washee and his mum in the Widow's laundry — Peter Aubrey (left) and Ted Gatty in the hot water.

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and P.C. Ping or the dragons Hokei and Coby — and the Widow is never short of a few laughs from the audience.

The cast is backed up by a

young chorus from the Sydney Woodman School of Dancing and this popular production runs until 12 January.

THE remarkable true story of wartime survival in Nazi-occupied Europe by a young American reporter and the two orphans he befriended is told in Bill Davidson's "Cut Off," just published in paperback by Sphere Books.

Davidson, advancing with the spearhead of the Allied armies through France, became trapped behind enemy lines in Belgium during the Battle of the Bulge.

Alone he had a fair chance of reaching safety. But fate took a hand by landing him with a pair of orphans who faced death if the Gestapo caught up with them. Their crime? They were Jews.

Davidson's journey became a hair-raising affair spiced with encounters with Nazi atrocities, black marketeers and the Belgian Resistance as the Germans mounted their final campaign to win the war.

How he won through is compellingly told, without frills, by a man who, despite the horrors of war, retained one vital quality... compassion.

Colin Wilcock has written widely about sport, the countryside and natural history. He has also written about dogs, a doughty Jack Russell that goes by the name of Dudley.

The book, not surprisingly titled "Dudley," is published in paperback by Sphere Books and is dedicated among others to all Jack Russell owners who, he says, "will know exactly what I am talking about."

Dudley has a wealth of character — a frightened of nothing or no-one, anxious to please, a rebel at heart, hero and criminal rolled into one. Wilcock describes him as "the worst dog in the world."

He really means the "best." It's a book for all dog lovers. Finally, there is help for the millions of headache sufferers who populate the world in Dr. Howard Kurland's "Quick Headache Relief — Without Drugs" also published by Sphere.

The book shows sufferers how to locate and apply pressure to the various points of the body which relate to headache pain.

D.A.S.

The Clash at Canterbury

ONE of the last surviving true punk rock bands still enjoying success, The Clash, play Canterbury Odeon on Sunday.

The four piece band from West London were one of the first groups to sign for a record company during the new wave explosion in 1977.

Their first album "The Clash" followed last year by "Give 'em Enough Rope" established them as the best

of the punks. Despite their success they have always remained true to their original ideals and much of their music, which has a lot of reggae overtones, carries a strong political message.

Their latest album "London Calling" and the single of the same name are also enjoying wide acclaim and should ensure a sell out for the Canterbury concert.