

It started as something I used to do on days and it's just got to the stage where I do it every time I come on board. I do it for luck really. I'm not really a religious man nor particularly that spiritual but I do kind of believe sometimes that bad luck finds you.... unfortunately. This is how I greet the Cutty Sark, 'HELLO CUTTY SARK....I HOPE YOU'RE WELL.....LOOK AFTER ME'

If people heard me say that, they'd think I was mad, saying hello to a boat.

Hello, my name's Alex McDonald and I'm a security officer working for the Royal Museums Greenwich.

Most of my working life has been in security. The boat to me is more than a place of work...it's alive and that's not just when it's open to the public. The boat is surrounded by glass as well as metal and wood. In the summertime as the boat and its surroundings cool down, it creaks. When the wind blows and during a storm you can hear the mast shaking. Don't be alarmed! This is nothing to worry about. I find it quite comforting in a strange way. Maybe I was a merchant seaman in a previous life. Maybe not....I don't like heights.

I wonder what the children must think, when we have school visits and they see Nannie up there, half dressed? What a weird name for a figurehead – Nannie. Certainly nothing like my Nan, who I called Nan up until I was forty. I lived with my grandmother up until she died and I have a lot of very very fond memories.

I can imagine what I would have been like as a child walking around the Cutty Sark and seeing that figurehead and tittering, laughing, pointing and asking embarrassing questions – like 'why's that figurehead half dressed?'

Nannie is painted white. Her left arm is holding a horse's tail. I bet Nannie would turn a few heads if she walked down Greenwich high street. That figurehead is one of forty nine other figureheads. Different colours, different sizes, different facial expressions and different ethnicities as well.

I do feel like I have an emotional link to the boat. I remember the last time I was on days and a kid was kicking his football against the boat and I went out and told him off and...I actually felt quite angry...it's almost as though he was attacking something of mine.

I left school at age of sixteen in 1984. I can remember my last day of school as if it was yesterday. I can remember how upset and scared I was. I grew up with a stammer and found it really difficult to go to interviews as I lacked so much self-esteem and confidence.

RADIO CALL 'Cutty Sark to control'. That's just to let them know in control I'm still alive.

I'm now standing on the Webber deck. The Cutty Sark has three masts...what it must have been like to actually climb up those masts and put the sails out in the storm. I can only guess at. Those men, they must have been physically as well as mentally really strong.

Cameras seem to be working ok. Make sure all the keys are in there.

I've always had an interest in history- even from a child. I can remember when I went for the interview and sitting there and saying that this was my dream job. And at that time I did really think that and to a certain extent...I still do!

And I actually thought at one stage, I wasn't going to get it and I remember emailing HR and actually asking them- Have I been successful? And I can remember the phone call and how pleased I was...so pleased. I still get that buzz, even now, even when it's freezing cold and I come in at twenty to six in the morning.

Radios? Yep. All the radios are here although no-ones used them. Yep! That's fine!

When I'm on nights I take my flask with me, I take something to eat, I take a book with me. And that's why it feels almost like a second home. Obviously I have to keep an eye on what I'm doing so I have to do regular patrols, keep an eye on the CCTV.

From the middle of the boat down to the dry dock where I am standing is all encased in glass. And it almost gives you that...that feeling of a ship in a bottle.

Now I'm walking back under the hull of the boat. It amazes me the dry docker- how it was built and constructed. The hull is actually propped up by twelve props on each side.

It is almost like...well...I always think it's like a cathedral.

Especially with the echo.