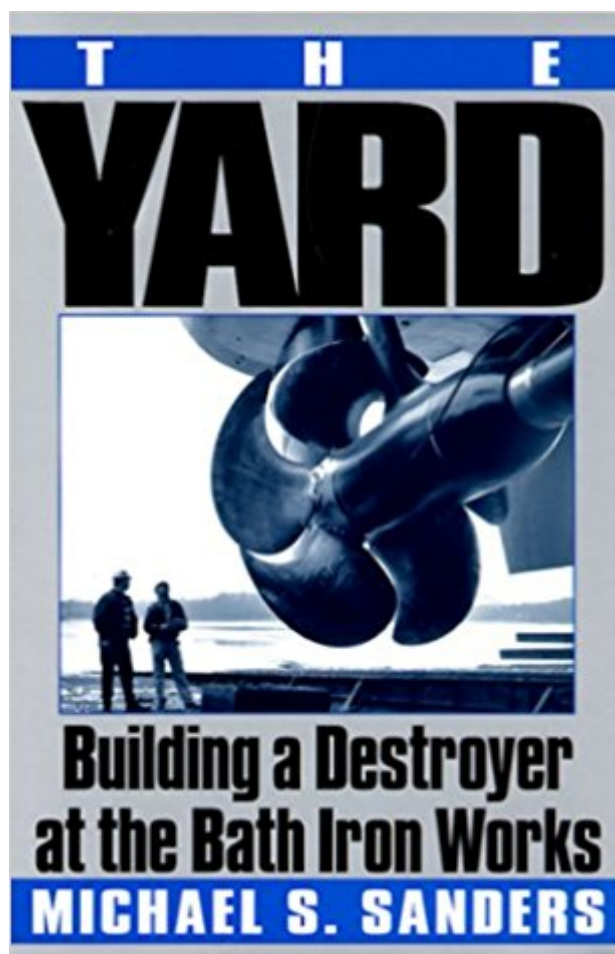


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The Yard: Building A Destroyer At The Bath Iron Works



Synopsis

Illustrates the building of and launching of the USS Donald Cook at the Bath Iron Works in Bath
Main using photographs and human interest stories of the people who work in these shipyards.
DLC: Destroyers (Warships)--U.S.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Michael S. Sanders describes the birth of a ship with the love of a parent, relating how the naval destroyer USS Donald Cook was "assembled over four years piece by piece, steel plate by steel plate, from the first half-moon slices of keel to topmost radar mast, almost by hand." The Yard is a land-based tale focusing on the thousands of men and women in Bath, Maine, who practice the old craft of shipbuilding. Their business has adapted itself to modern ways, but Sanders intriguingly shows how ancient Phoenicians would nevertheless recognize important parts of today's construction process. Sanders spends plenty of time explaining what goes into making a ship: the engineering, the materials, and the labor. He also tells of an industry in peril, as American shipyards compete against foreign builders whose governments subsidize their work. Yet The Yard is ultimately about ordinary people who build: "electricians, pipefitters, welders, braziers, tinknockers, riggers, anglesmiths, straighteners, blasters, and shipfitters" plus "legions of naval architects, draftsmen, and marine engineers." The Yard may lack the dazzle of Blind Man's Bluff and its stories of submarine espionage, but it will hold a similarly strong attraction for readers drawn to human endeavor on the open sea and what makes it possible. --John J. Miller

This book is rich in content, in texture and not least in integrity. Sanders has been a ghostwriter, but he finds his own voice in this story of a shipyard, a ship and their people. The yard is the Bath Iron Works (BIW), in Maine, and it has been building ships for more than a century. The ship is the U.S.S. Donald Cook, a state-of-the-art destroyer. From the first rough sizing of the plates to the actual launching takes almost four years. Sanders's greatest triumph is his description of shipbuilding processes in language that a lay reader can readily understand. His second achievement is his depiction of the shipyard culture. Sanders eschews an elegiac approach, depicting a shipbuilding community whose ties and loyalties cut across management-labor lines. Shipbuilding is a skilled craft that demands a synergy of strength and artistry. It is dirty. It is dangerous. And BIW's employees merit respect for their skills. At the book's end BIW, rather than fading from the scene, is poised to enter the 21st century at the cutting edge of ship construction. When the navy takes over, the Cook becomes the focus of a different but equally effective kind of crew. The shipyard community is local, coming largely from Bath itself, and it is essentially male. The Cook's commissioning crew is cosmopolitan, with a broad spectrum of backgrounds and experiences, and it includes three dozen women. The men and women who serve on the Cook are like their ship and its builders: among the best in the world. Sanders's own craftsmanship is as worthy of recognition as that of the shipbuilders whose story he so ably tells. Illustrations not seen by PW. (Nov.) Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Full disclosure: I'm a naval architect who worked for BIW for a few years, so I'm hardly an unbiased reviewer. But as someone who worked there, I can say that this book taught me things I didn't know. The character studies and description of the town were spot on. Building something as complex as a naval destroyer is one of the most intense and awe-inspiring engineering feats in our modern world -- and this book gives you a fantastic front row seat. It made me wish I was back in the thick of things! I'd recommend it for those who love shipyards or are merely curious about what goes on in one.

I served on a destroyer 1962-66 and was fascinated at how a ship is built and launched. A most interesting read.

"Bath Built is Best Built". a saying among the workers at the historic Bath Iron Works (BIW), Bath Maine. This book analyzes a modern-day shipyard in Maine in a unique way. The Bath Iron Works

shipyard has a long history that mirrors this nation's shipbuilding legacy. The author gives a brief history of the shipyard, with its economic ups and downs. The meat of the book explains how a U.S. Naval order for a new Arleigh-Burke class destroyer is fabricated. The components literally snake their way through the shipyard over months. The book weaves a little personal history of some individual workers and their duties and how it ties into the final end-product. BIW is a modern shipyard, using modular construction and a BIW pioneered upside down fabrication technique. The description of the launching process is intriguing. This book is an easy read. A short book with a lot of information packed into it, that will reward the reader looking for a little information in areas most people are excluded from.

This is a very interesting book. The reader gets lost in the storyline. You learn about the history of ship building while not really realizing it. I really like the stories of the people that work there and the towns people and how everything ties together. Anyone with any mechanical interests or people who like old town history this is a good easy read.

Liked the non-formal style and outsiders view of Naval construction. It also was nice to see my ship in print and be able to relate the people I know to the stories told about them.

Item was as described. Fairly fast shipping. Satisfied buyer.

My husband and I recently visited Maine. We both enjoyed the old Bath Boat Works and Museum. This book was suggested to me and I purchased it for my husband as part of our first anniversary which is paper. As he read the book he would tell me stories also. It was a big hit.

Every summer, thousands of people drive through Bath on their way to coastal Maine. If they are like this reviewer, many of them look at the Bath Iron Works as they pass by and wonder how those worthy ships get built. Well, wonder no longer. The Yard tells the story, and tells it very well.

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