Stannah and the ss Great Britain: Engineering the past into the present day

With our shared roots in Victorian engineering it seemed fitting that we were able to make Isambard Kingdom Brunel’s ss Great Britain accessible to all.
The ss Great Britain is a pioneering, 19th-century passenger steamship designed by British civil engineer, Isambard Kingdom Brunel, for the Great Western Steamship Company’s transatlantic service between Bristol and New York.

Challenging logistics
Built from iron with a height, from keel to main deck, of 32’ 6” (9.91m), the logistics of helping mobility compromised visitors navigate three decks posed a unique challenge for Stannah Lifts as, amongst many considerations, access had to be made through the centre of the ship, and through a glass plate into the Dry Dock below.

Problem-solving by five Stannah lifts
Drawing upon a mutual history in Victorian engineering, the Stannah lift team brought complete access for all by installing a total of five lifts ranged over the ship itself, the Dockyard Museum, and the Brunel Institute, a world-class conservation and education centre sited alongside the vessel:
- 1 x 3-stop, 8-person Maxilift passenger lift in the Dockyard Museum
- 2 x 2-stop Midilifts onboard ship
- 1 x 2-stop Midilift on the quay at water level.
- 1 x 2-stop Midilift in the Brunel Institute and Library

150,000+
annual visitor rate
322
feet long (98m)
3
decks onboard ship
5
access-for-all lifts
Case Study: ss Great Britain

1 x 3-stop, 8-person Maxilift M MRC passenger lift in the Museum/entrance

Location: Dockyard Museum.
Travel: 5345mm.
Brings access over two floors to interactive information and artefacts. Visitors to Brunel’s ss Great Britain can also use the lift to reach the bridge that takes them on to the ship’s upper deck.
With Stannah’s assistance, between 150,000 -170,000 annual visitors to this national treasure enjoy complete access to its cultural heritage.
2 x 2-stop Midilifts on board the ship

Locations: one in front of the ship’s funnel, one on the promenade deck.

The lifts move slowly through the ship to the promenade deck and lower deck, home to a multitude of functions.
Brunel’s ss Great Britain: Maritimeline

1843 Launch of this first-of-its-kind, iron-built, screw-propelled steamer.

1845 Maiden voyage, crossing the Atlantic in the record time of 14 days.

1881 Converted to sail after carrying thousands of emigrants to Australia.

1884 Used as a floating warehouse, quarantine ship and coal hulk, in the Falkland Islands.

1937 Scuttled, at Sparrow Cove, near Port Stanley.

1970 Salvaged and returned to Bristol and the Great Western Dockyard, her birthplace.

2011 Listed as part of the National Historic Fleet, Core Collection, the vessel is a multi award-winning visitor attraction and venue, museum ship and education centre in Bristol’s Floating Harbour.
1 x 2-stop Midilift providing access to under the waterline

Location: on the quay at water level.

Takes visitors down into the Dry Dock through a glass ‘sea’ or waterline plate that forms the roof of a giant dehumidification chamber. Covered by a layer of water, the plate creates the illusion of a ship afloat on calm waters.
1 x 2-stop Midlift SL in the Brunel Institute

Location: David MacGregor Library, Brunel Institute.

Providing access for Brunel Institute users, connecting the David MacGregor Library, next to the National Brunel Archive, the Foyle Reading Room, the Great Western Room and the Viridor Theatre. The Brunel Institute is home to the world’s finest collection of original Brunel sources, delivering inclusive and innovative learning programmes where the focus is Brunel, maritime history, archaeology, science and engineering.
Maxilift passenger lifts: Designed and manufactured by Stannah in the UK, the Maxilift range includes six capacity models from 6-16 person, with an excellent range of lift car finishes available throughout. Maxilift M is the ‘base’ model offering a simple and elegant finish that is stylish yet affordable and hard-wearing. Available in a choice of light or dark grey colour schemes, with a number of optional extras which can be added to enhance the interior finish.

MRC (Motor Room Cabinet): a space-saving motor room-less lift with the drive system and controller housed in a cabinet which can be located on, or recessed into, an adjacent wall.

Features: wall-mounted; fully automatic; low-level operating buttons; optimum lighting; voice enunciators; accurate levelling for ease of access; complies with the latest European manufacturing standard BS EN 81 – 70 (lifts are suitable for disabled users).

Midilift platform lifts: Comprising three models – SL, DL and XLplus – Stannah’s Midilift range of vertical platform lifts is ideal for improving access within new or existing buildings, helping you to meet all of the latest regulations and guidelines governing access to public buildings. Designed to carry a single wheelchair-user and attendant, the Midilift is ideal for applications where space and lighting are restricted and the installation of a conventional passenger lift is not practicable. Constant-pressure operating controls operate from inside or outside the car.

Three platform sizes are available, and all models can accommodate entrances on up to three sides. All Midilifts are supplied with their own structure-supported enclosure, which can be fitted with either steel or glass panels, or a combination of the two. Quick and easy to install, the Midilift requires a minimum of builders work, making it an extremely cost-effective access solution.

Stannah Lifimeline

2005: 8-person, 3-stop Maxilift M
       MRC passenger lift.
       3 x 2-stop Midilifts.

2010: 1 x 2-stop Midilift SL.

Present day: Despite the challenging logistics, installations were on time and on budget, bringing complete access for circa 150,000 – 170,000 visitors every year to Brunel’s ss Great Britain.

SOLD… on Stannah specification

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SOLD!

… on Maintenance

All lifts were installed with a Stannah 1-year, full maintenance package as part of the contract.

They are serviced by the Bristol branch of Stannah Lift Services, a nationwide network providing 24 hour, 365 days a year support. This covers service, repair, modernisation and refurbishment of all types of lifts, stairlifts, escalators and moving walkways – not only those from the Stannah product range, but also other lift manufacturers’ equipment.

Stannah also offers a bespoke lifts service, custom-building lifts to meet specific requirements.

… on the Stannah promise

Stannah is committed to delivering:

The best quality products
Superior service
Good value for money
And, last but not least, complete reliability

… on a 150-year lift manufacturing pedigree

All Stannah lift products meet required standards, including:

To find out more about Stannah’s comprehensive ranges of Passenger Lifts, Platform Lifts, Escalators & Moving Walkways and Goods Lifts, go to

www.stannahlifts.co.uk

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