

# Fathom



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A pirates-as-punks exhibition  
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## Director's foreword

Our year began with the dismantling of *Monsters of the Deep* in preparation for the install of our next major temporary exhibition. Even in its third year, exit surveys and self-completed questionnaires demonstrated that *Monsters* had remained the principal reason given for visiting the Museum, with 91% of visitors stating they were either ‘very likely’ or ‘likely’ to recommend the Museum to family and friends.

In early February, we were honoured by a visit from Their Royal Highnesses, The Prince and Princess of Wales, to celebrate our 20th anniversary. National Maritime Museum Cornwall was chosen as the venue for their first official joint engagement in Cornwall since taking on their new roles as The Duke and Duchess of Cornwall.

During their visit Their Royal Highnesses inspected *Kiwi*, a 14ft sailing dinghy which had been presented to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and HRH Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh, as a wedding present from the Royal New Zealand Navy. During their tour they visited the Museum's internal workshop and took turns to hammer copper rivets into the mahogany planking of a 1940s Helford Delta dinghy, before

competing against each other on the Museum's popular boating pool using radio-controlled yachts (pages 56–57).

February also saw us switch over to a new online ticketing and electronic point of sale system platform called Visisoft. Despite some initial back-office teething problems, the system of booking admission and event tickets was greatly improved in good time for our busy summer season.

*Pirates*, our latest major exhibition, coproduced with Royal Museums Greenwich, was opened on Thursday 30 March by Isabel Ryan, youngest daughter of John Ryan, the creator of Captain Pugwash. The exhibition includes loans from National Maritime Museum, British Museum, The National Archives, Rye Town Council, the John Ryan Estate and Rare, a British ➡



**Image** Visitors in the *Pirates* exhibition.

Xbox game developer, who created the pirate-themed action-adventure game, *Sea of Thieves*, one of the most streamed games globally, with some 400,000 people currently playing the game every month (pages 22–25).

*Pirates* has been well received, smashing all previous box office records. This achievement is even more impressive set against the cost-of-living crisis and Visit Cornwall’s estimate that the number of visitors to Cornwall has dropped by 20% this summer. We were also delighted to work with Queer Kernow, a non-profit LGBTQIA+ community initiative, in the narrative shaping of the exhibition. The resulting installation, *Queer Pirate*, continues the Museum’s commitment to creating exhibitions – and visitor experiences – that include a wider, and more diverse range of stories, perspectives and identities (at the same time as recognising that we still have much to learn, more to do and more to change). We hope to work with Queer Kernow in the near future (pages 16–21).

Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust opened *Monsters of the Deep* on Saturday 1 April 2023. Hiring out the show not only helped us to recover part of our original investment, but it also enabled us to make savings on the cost of dismantling the exhibition and returning objects to loan institutions. By the time the exhibition closed in Chatham at the end of November, our exhibition had been seen by an additional 53,181 visitors, bringing the combined total number of visitors to *Monsters of the Deep* to 287,181, despite the impact on footfall due to the Coronavirus pandemic (pages 68–71).

In April, we published our *Tattoo* report, *A Catalyst for Change*, and signed the Grant Agreement to secure a DCMS/Wolfson Fund grant awarded in their 2022–24 funding round to revitalise the Museum’s main gallery. The Boat Hall is one of our biggest ‘wows’ and is the space in which we introduce visitors to who we are, what our collections are about, and how the building works in terms of physical and intellectual wayfinding. This project, designed to reimagine the presentation of the National Small Boat Collection, is a major undertaking, with structural building work, extremely complex boat moves, AV installations, new interpretation, cases and boat cradles, not to mention new digital interpretation/software for the ramp. The first phase of work, which included replacing the high-level house and spotlights and rehangng the suspended boats, took seven weeks to complete. During this period, we halved our admission charges due to the need to close several galleries, reopening the whole Museum in time for

the Christmas holiday. We are hugely grateful to the Wolfson Foundation and Department of Culture, Media and Sport for their generous support (pages 32–37).

In June the Museum was taken over for National Armed Forces Day, becoming the base for Bronze Command, police briefings, VIPs and the media. The Museum was also used to host the Gala Dinner. The following week Falmouth was the venue for a Tall Ships visit, attracting around 45,000 additional visitors to the town, during which time the Museum became a main source of event information with our dedicated webpages securing thousands of visits.

June was also the month when the Bligh replica launch completed her mammoth journey to the Bounty Museum on Norfolk Island. It took almost four and a half months to reach its new home (pages 86–91).

Looking ahead to 2024, we will be working in partnership with TerraVerde Sustainability Limited, to carry out a comprehensive environmental audit to measure our consumption of energy, water, waste, fuel, paper, IT, business travel, homeworking, commuting, and purchasing, to assess our greenhouse gas and carbon emissions footprint and other environmental impacts. This work will inform the development of a Green Audit Action Plan. We will select a baseline year and set clear goals and objectives to achieve a 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions in our operations, programming, and facilities management by 2030.

We are also looking forward to hosting the UK Maritime Heritage Forum 2024 Conference in October. We are proposing that the conference focuses on Britain’s coastal experience from small boats to the politics of contemporary collecting.

We are immensely proud of all we have achieved in 2023. We have welcomed 124,731 visitors and delivered our most ambitious events programme to date. From the live performances of *A Pirate’s Life for Me!* to evenings of music, the introduction of farmer’s markets on Events Square and the creation of a willow lobster pot Christmas tree which went viral on social media, quickly reaching over 90,000 people within the first 24 hours. These initiatives, alongside all our core activities, underline our commitment to being a vibrant 21st century museum.

Richard Doughty, Director  
*National Maritime Museum Cornwall, December 2023*

**Image** A Christmas tree made from traditional lobster pots handmade by Cornish fisherman Nigel Legge.



# Contents

Fathom — Issue 7

## Exhibitions

- 10 Pirates
- 16 The Queer Pirate
- 22 Sea of Thieves
- 26 Cornwall Loan

## Transformations

- 30 Skull Island Play Zone
- 32 The Boat Hall Re-rig
- 38 Flying Wanderer

## Reflections

- 42 Our schools programme
- 48 New acquisitions
- 54 Volunteers give 20 years
- 56 Royal Visit
- 58 Understanding our visitors
- 64 New scanner & digital studio

## Connections

- 68 Monsters of the Deep at Chatham
- 72 Family programming
- 76 Arthur's Club
- 78 Free admission for the most vulnerable
- 80 Baby lobster release
- 82 New online shop
- 86 Bounty Launch *Bligh's Tribute* – the final leg

## Below Deck

- 94 About National Maritime Museum Cornwall
- 96 2023 listings
- 98 Thank You



Image During the installation of Pirates.

# Exhibitions



# Pirates

Fact, fiction and popular culture

**P**irates marked a milestone for us: for the first time we took the lead in developing an exhibition with a national museum. Opening in Falmouth in March 2023, the displays will transfer to Royal Museums Greenwich in early 2025.

To create an exhibition that appeals to both children and adults, we begin with a light-hearted look at pirates in popular culture, exploring how their image was created and sustained, before delving into the dark reality of the so-called Golden Age of Piracy.

Loans from Royal Museums Greenwich and other museums are used imaginatively as are other media, including a specially created video by the makers of the *Sea of Thieves* video game and a commissioned reproduction of Captain Hook's costume from the original 1904 production.

In planning the exhibition, it was also important to us not to have a single interpretation of the pirate story, so we included a number of alternative voices, including an interview with the Education Officer at the National Museum of Jamaica, who gave a view of the significance of historical pirates on the island today, and an installation by the local LGBTQIA+ community responding to the pirate phenomenon as a symbol of outsider rebellion.

*Pirates* explores a very simple question: why do we love pirates? When we were planning the exhibition, we knew

we wanted to borrow and display star objects from the Golden Age of Piracy. We also wanted to shine a light on how the entertainment industry has shaped our perception of pirates today. We are particularly grateful to former Poet Laureate Sir Andrew Motion, who explains on screen, why he thinks *Treasure Island* is such a successful book, before going on to talk about his two sequels – *Silver* and *The New Country*.

We were particularly interested to explore issues around fact and fiction. For example, how have popular representations of pirates dealt with the harsher realities of piracy, such as physical violence, the use of terror, theft, enslavement, dishonesty and punishment. Conversely, we also wanted to consider the positive aspects of pirate history such as early forms of democracy.

The people who became pirates were often rebelling against unfair and challenging social and political pressures. For example, large numbers of Royal Navy sailors deserted in favour of a pirate life because they were subjected to harsh discipline. As a pirate they enjoyed greater equality, fairer treatment, more rights and benefits and even compensation (Pirate Articles). The reality was that pirates were often highly skilled, well-coordinated, flexible, democratic (they could even elect their own captain) and what's more they were canny business operators, alert to the opportunities of global markets. ☞



**Left** 18th century powder horns, pistols and musket balls on display.

**Right** A cabinet featuring the model of a 50-gun warship and historic books.

**Below** The exhibition features projections of classic films that have shaped our perception of pirates.



# WHAT WERE PIRATES REALLY LIKE?

## What did people think of pirates at the time?

Pirates disrupted legitimate trade and the rule of law. The British government hated them - unless they were attacking foreign ships.

Piracy became a major problem between about 1600 and 1730. At first, the Royal Navy lacked the means to deal with the menace effectively. Sailors who promised to give prosecution for past crimes to those who captured pirates were treated harshly and faced the death penalty.

But not all government officials opposed piracy. In the Caribbean and North American colonies, pirate activity boosted the local economy, bringing in scarce goods and expensive supplies, and supporting local markets in the British trade.

The general public also had a mixed view. People might sing a ballad celebrating one pirate's adventures but equally they might happily march out to see another hanged.

These ballads commemorated the lives of pirates who pillaged and looted ships and coastal settlements. The one celebrating the capture of William Kidd is the original libelous ballad.

## A General History of the Pyrates

Wrote in 1724, the book by Samuel Purchas is based on the accounts of the sailors who had been captured and imprisoned in the West Indies.

First published in 1724, Charles Johnson's A General History of the Pyrates and Robbers of the Sea is a collection of accounts of the lives of the most famous pirates of the 17th and 18th centuries. The book was written in a style that was popular at the time. It is a mix of fact and fiction, and is often used as a source for the history of piracy.

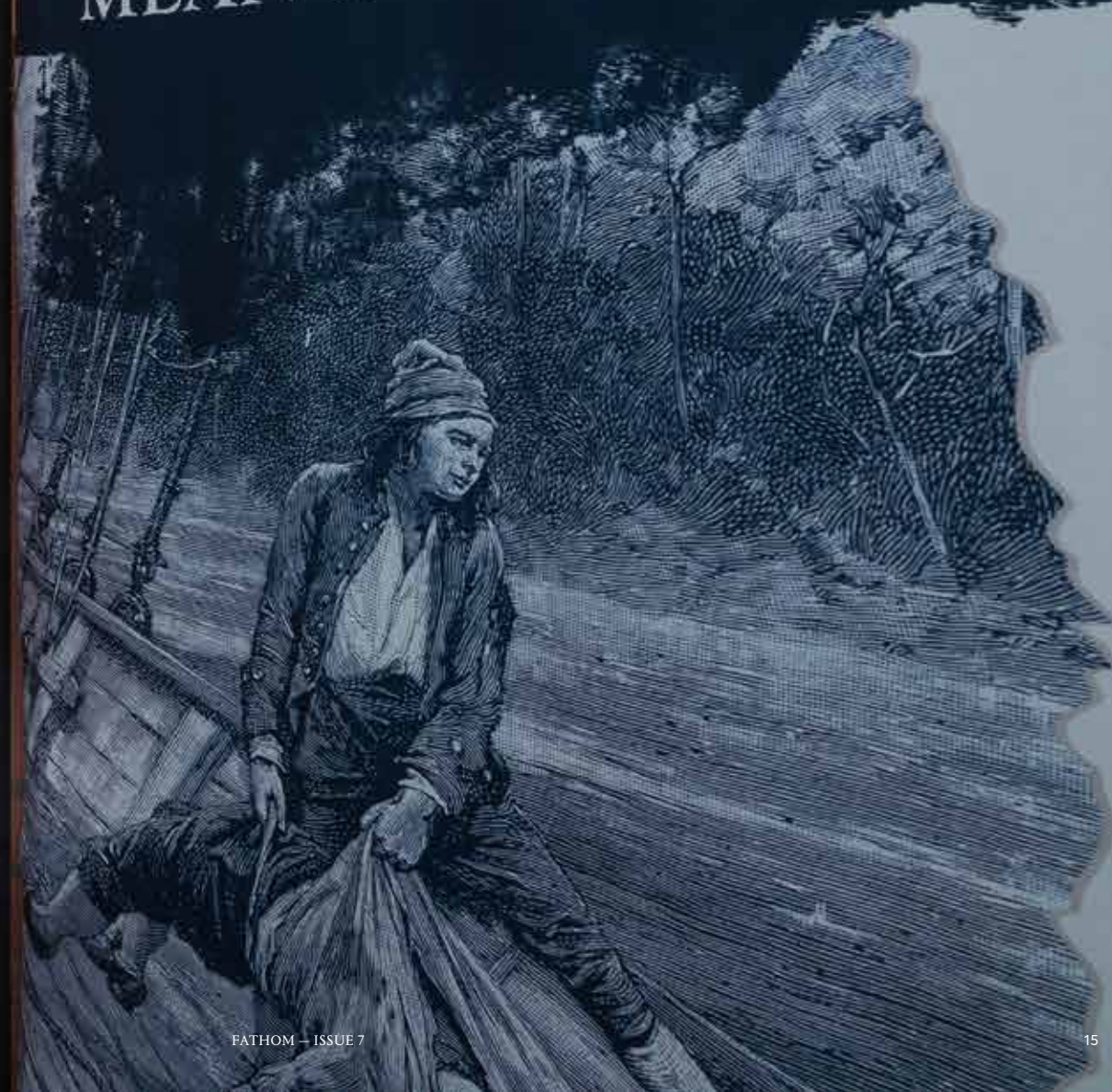
In places it is a bit of a mess, but it is a good read. It is a mix of fact and fiction, and is often used as a source for the history of piracy.

A GENERAL HISTORY OF THE ROBBERIES AND MURDERS OF THE MOST NOTORIOUS PIRATES, AND ALSO THEIR POLICIES, DISCIPLINE AND GOVERNMENT, FROM THEIR FIRST RISE AND SETTLEMENT IN THE ISLAND OF PROVIDENCE, IN 1717, TO THE PRESENT YEAR 1724. WITH THE REMARKABLE ACTIONS AND ADVENTURES OF THE TWO FEMALE PIRATES, MARY READ AND ANNE BONNY.



HISTORY OF THE ROBBERIES AND MURDERS OF THE MOST NOTORIOUS PIRATES.

# WHAT DO PIRATES MEAN TO US?



We resurrect these queer p  
surface. Our Queer histori  
bodies discarded, stories su

We have always been here

Our once brittle bones now awakened,  
voices raised, strong and bristling with pride

So that with each ebb and flow of history  
we will be seen...



# The Queer Pirate

‘Absence of evidence isn’t evidence of absence’

Sophie Meyer, Founder and Director of Queer Kernow CIC

Sophie Meyer led the project team for an artistic intervention in the narrative of *Pirates* that involved members of Queer Kernow, the LGBTQIA+ community and the Museum. She provides an account of the project and processes here.

Queer Kernow is a queer-led non-profit organisation that works to champion and research LGBTQIA+ history in Cornwall. By supporting the *Pirates* exhibition with National Maritime Museum Cornwall, Queer Kernow was able to offer the opportunity for the local LGBTQIA+ community to explore their relationship with the traditional narrative of piracy, and bring light to diverse stories that may be nestled between the pages of history.

Consider, for example, that pirates of the Golden Age existed in the shadows, disavowing the constraints of society and creating their own laws, rules, and culture... a secretive lifestyle that sounds familiar to many queer people throughout history. It’s not surprising, then, that so many people in our community resonate with the pirates of the past. It’s by examining the culture of the Golden Age of Piracy through a queer and inclusive lens, that we can start to unravel these experiences and stories that resonate throughout time.

The overall aim of Queer Kernow’s participation in this project was to ensure greater representation within the *Pirates* exhibition. When it comes to representation, Queer Kernow knows that queer people have always existed and so it’s just a matter of showing our existence in places where we always have been.

So how do we start uncovering this history? Finding evidence for anything pirate-related is a challenge in itself. Pirates kept to the shadows out of necessity, and certainly didn’t keep copious records of their escapades. Most of the information we have about the Golden Age of Piracy comes from tangential information, for example, trial documents for those captured, newspaper reports, merchant letters, counsel letters, admiralty court papers, and of course *A General History of the Pyrates*, which was published in 1724 by Captain Charles Johnson.

However, when reading history from an inclusive perspective you learn to look out for the queer semiotics surrounding stories and people. Consider the fact that love and desire leave no archaeological trace. The dividing line between friendship and love can be thin, that’s true, but why do we always look through the lens of heteronormativity to define the two?

When the entire history of your existence is criminalised and hidden from the historical record, you must pay attention to the inferences, the queer coding; absence of evidence isn’t evidence of absence. Queer historians must simply read history in a different way.

Queer communities historically are highly sensitive to this form of coded communication. In situations where open ➡

**Image** Pieces of driftwood and sail material that make up the bones of the Queer Pirate.

display of your sexuality or gender identity could result in physical harm, unemployment, or rejection by family members, coded communication becomes a form of safety. The senses strain to pick up tiny details of recognition, and the way in which something isn't said.

The burden of proof is often overpowering when heteronormativity is the default. There are a number of inferences that can be read in many ways. Matelotage, for example, is a form of pirate law tying pirates' financial interests together that is academically seen as 'not gay', but paradoxically it is seen as a form of marriage. Who makes the determination that this was purely economical and not also emotional? How can we assume to know the motivations of people who lived hundreds of years ago in a culture that was barely documented by those within it? Is it not more likely that our reading of history is influenced by the society in which we were raised and the experiences and beliefs of the historian?

For inclusive historians this is often the primary objective when doing research: untangling historical accounts from the cultural assumptions of that time and the writer's viewpoint of that situation. An example from the Golden Age of Piracy are the famous 'Pirate Queens', Anne Bonny and Mary Read. Anne and Mary were historically considered to be women who dressed in men's clothing to 'pass' as male pirates. However, looking through a queer lens we consider the fact that Mary Read also used the name Mark Read, and that no historical account states which name was preferred. Was Read happily living as Mark Read? Did they identify as a man? There is no way to know, but exploring these questions is exactly what Queer Kernow and Artist Scamp Niemz explored in our work with National Maritime Museum Cornwall.

Given the aforementioned difficulty of acquiring accurate evidence of the private lives of pirates during the Golden Age, we knew the importance of creating something tangible for the exhibition. Consequently, it was agreed early on that an artistic

representation of queer pirates would be the best avenue for display. We thought that an installation or costume of some sort representing LGBTQIA+ piracy would use the space well and be able to communicate the complex relationship the community might have with the subject. Queer Kernow worked with the artist Scamp Niemz to create this tangible response to queer pirates for the exhibition.

Both Niemz and Queer Kernow felt it was important to make sure the voices of the local LGBTQIA+ community had a chance to relay their own opinions on how they interacted with, thought of, and played with the ideas of the Golden Age of Piracy. We did this in a number of ways, first, by taking the provocation 'What do pirates mean to you?' to Cornwall Pride celebrations in Falmouth and Truro. We spoke to hundreds of people about how they related to pirates, how the narrative of a traditional 'boys own club' was changing with shows such as *Our Flag Means Death* and *Black Sails* which both widened their interpretation of piracy to be more inclusive of gender, race, and disability.

A lot of responses resonated with the fact that pirates were shunned by societal norms and 'polite' society, much like the queer community has often been, and that commonality between these two seemingly disparate identities can hold weight. The power of acting as your authentic self and throwing off the shackles of what is expected of you is clearly a narrative that is both queer and pirate related. (No wonder piracy is a popular culture reference in LGBTQIA+ spheres!)

Queer Kernow also held a workshop at the Museum that delved deeper into how to represent this queer perspective of piracy with the exhibition and curatorial team. Through creative workshops with queer Cornish community members, we developed these ideas and emotions. Niemz had the idea to use the responses made from these workshops to make up the literal bones of the Queer Pirate (Veronica) using pieces of driftwood and sail material. If you look closely at the ➡➡

‘Queer Pirate continues the Museum’s commitment to creating exhibitions – and visitor experiences – that include a wider, and more diverse range of stories, perspectives and identities (at the same time as recognising that we still have much to learn, more to do and more to change). We hope to work with Queer Kernow in the near future.’

Richard Doughty, Director



**Image** Queer Kernow's workshop at the Museum explored how to represent queer perspectives of pirates.

skeleton, you can see dozens, maybe even hundreds, of notes and drawings and protests from the community. Constructing these bones into the recognisable form of a pirate is a nod to the importance of costume within both the queer community and the Golden Age of Piracy. The iconic hat, of course, represents the traditional image of a pirate, whereas the skirt represents the queer community's love of costume, particularly drag culture. The combining of these two concepts using driftwood from Cornish shores culminates into a fascinating work of art that has been a talking point of the exhibition.

'Veronica' stands proud and tall in the *Pirates* exhibition, representing the lost queer pirates that we know existed yet we cannot know. She is made entirely of recycled materials and Cornish driftwood.

The artist, Scamp Niemz, talks about the importance of working with the community to create this central art piece: 'We have no [permanent] queer spaces in Cornwall, so these workshops offered the freedom to be honest, and the voice and autonomy to speak their minds.'

It was important for both Queer Kernow and Scamp Niemz to make these workshops accessible to the community and consequently hosted workshops in a variety of locations, but where possible used venues that would already feel welcoming to the community. In Falmouth, for example, initial engagement for this project took place at Falmouth Pride and a later creative workshop took place at the Fish Factory in Penryn (a queer art hub).

'We allowed participants to be completely uncensored,' says Niemz. 'This allowed people to have reclamation of words that can be considered slurs. The driftwood art is not just one voice, or one agenda, but a plethora of artistic responses. Everyone's response to the idea is different and everyone's relationship with being queer is unique. We wanted all voices to be able to speak while creating a singular and cohesive piece of art.'

There was a process of finding the right medium for these voices. We began using cork coasters and inviting people to decorate them as their own 'pirate emblem' or 'jolly roger'. However, we later moved into driftwood art. Niemz considered it was important to connect people to the water and walking along the Cornish coast and estuaries on the hunt for natural

driftwood helped aid this connection to the ocean, and this act of collecting oft-discarded materials echoed the project to collect oft-discarded voices.

The end result is a piece of art that takes up space, is proudly queer, and isn't censored. As well as being a thought-provoking piece of art, we hope that this installation opens up a more inclusive understanding of this period of history and invites visitors to consider the queer implications of piracy and the queer pirates that likely existed but whose names are consigned to history.

Queer Kernow was also conscious not to limit the queer interpretation to a single art piece, and wanted to give context to the wider picture where possible. Queer Kernow was invited to work with the curators of *Pirates* to ensure that captions and information panels were as inclusive as possible, and included figures such as Bonny and Read.

One of the difficulties in doing this work is balancing the views of a multitude of museum professionals, academics, designers, and steering groups that all feed into the outcome of how an exhibition looks and feels. You can spend hours debating over the right turn of phrase. This is where Queer Kernow often implores museums to be bolder and braver. It is understandably a huge step for museums to take up the mantle of non-neutrality but by not engaging – by keeping yourself out of the conversation – you've already unwittingly taken a side.

Queer Kernow often consults with museums and galleries like National Maritime Museum Cornwall to ensure that their histories and their exhibitions are inclusive. When curating an exhibition it is important to consider who is in the room when these decisions on language, tone, and vision are being made, as far too often museums fall short of ensuring diversity in these conversations. Steps are sometimes taken to consult with communities, but if their views aren't respected or given the weight they deserve it becomes a performative action. National Maritime Museum Cornwall was proactive in approaching Queer Kernow which ensured, where possible, that the *Pirates* exhibition was an inclusive, interesting, and successful exhibition which will be enjoyed for many years to come.

If you would like to know more about our work, please visit [www.queerkernow.co.uk](http://www.queerkernow.co.uk).



Image Captain Flameheart, the main antagonist in *Sea of Thieves*.



# Sea of Thieves

Legendary adventures on the high seas

One of the principal themes of our *Pirates* exhibition considers how authors and artists (from the 18th century onwards) have taken a moment in history and created new worlds around it. For this reason, we wanted to feature representations of pirates in popular culture including literature, theatre, pantomime, film, television and video games.

The most recent iteration of pirates is in the gaming world. We were therefore particularly keen to incorporate an example of how game producers have taken the pirate story and developed it. Fortunately, in 2021, while we were planning the exhibition, Rare Studios, a first-party developer for Microsoft, launched an Xbox action game in which multiple players could create adventures online, in a shared alternative world, without any strict rules to follow.

*Sea of Thieves* may not be a game which strives for historical accuracy (most of us know pirates didn't fire people out of cannons in real life), however, players don't need to be told that pirates sail ships, drink copious amounts of grog, fire cannons and are obsessed with treasure! Nevertheless, the game does

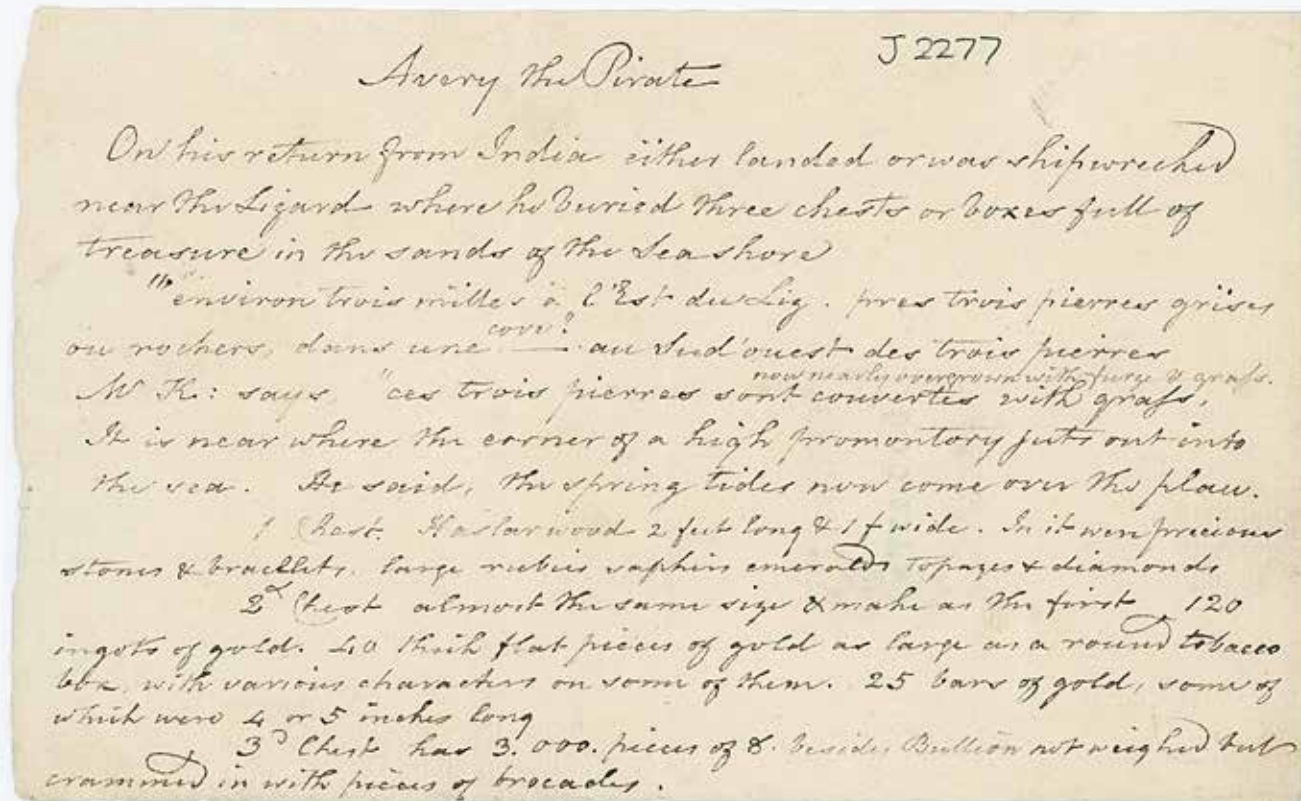
illustrate some of the broader themes we wanted our visitors to think about around ideas like the importance of collaboration, togetherness and independence. In the words of Jack Sparrow – 'Wherever we want to go, we go. That's what a ship is, you know. It's not just a keel and hull and a deck and sails. That's what a ship needs. But what a ship is... what the *Black Pearl* really is... is freedom.'

We are indebted to Rare Studios for partnering with us on this exciting project. They generously provided film content we could screen at the beginning of the exhibition to create an initial 'wow' experience. The story board showcases a crew, replete with wooden legs, cutlasses and a parrot, before they embark on a quest to find buried treasure, armed with a map marked with an 'X'.

As the narrator says, 'Our world came before the pirates of the silver screen and before them were the pirates of the written word, and before them there were real pirates.' Visitors are then invited to discover what is true and what is fantasy by stepping into the exhibition. ☪

**Image** The large screen at the start of the exhibition shows a specially created *Sea of Thieves* video.





# Cornwall Loan

## Captain Avery document

As part of the *Pirates* exhibition, we had the opportunity to borrow this fantastic document from Kresen Kernow, allowing us to shine the spotlight on Cornish pirates. This loan builds on previous loans from Kresen Kernow for the *Monsters of the Deep* exhibition, strengthening the connection between the two organisations.

This seemingly inconspicuous document, partly written in French, describes where the notorious pirate Captain Avery allegedly buried his treasure. Avery returned to Cornwall from India in the 1700s, where he landed or was shipwrecked near the Lizard. Three chests full of treasure were supposedly buried in the sand, giving rise to the legend of pirates burying their treasure and inspiring many local hunts for the treasure.

### Transcription/translation:

'About three miles to the east of the Lizard...under three grey stones or rocks in a cove to the southwest, 'the three stones are covered with grass.' It is near where the corner of the high promontory juts out into the sea, He said, the spring tides now come over the place. One chest Haslarwood[?] 2 feet long and 1ft wide. In it was precious stones and bracelets, large rubies, sapphires, emeralds, topazes and diamonds. Second chest almost the same size and make as the first. 120 ingots of gold, 40 thick flat pieces of gold as large as a round tobacco box, with various characters on some of them, 25 bars of gold, some of which were 4 or 5 inches long. Third chest has 3,000 pieces of 8 besides Bullion not weighted but crammed with prices of brocades.'

# Transformations

Image The Eton 10 Monarch being lowered to make way for Wanderer.



# Skull Island Play Zone

The opening of Skull Island Play Zone this year continues the Museum's popular programme of specially designed active learning spaces linked to our current major temporary exhibition – in this case, *Pirates*.

These spaces are much loved by early years children (and their adults!). Feedback has shown that they meet a real need in local and tourist families for active learning spaces that are safe and dry and inspire children's role-play imagination throughout the year. The Play Zones are supported by our award-winning Museum Minnows Tales – a 'story and rhyme-time' early years programme during term time.

Each Play Zone is an essential part of our family friendly offer and represents a significant investment in terms of financial and creative resources. This year, for example, Skull Island features a giant 3D pirate skull complete with snake slide, together with bespoke safety flooring throughout. 🐍



Image Children exploring the Skull Island Play Zone.

Image A view of the Boat Hall during the Re-rig, where many of the hanging boats lay resting on the floor.



# The Boat Hall Re-rig

**W**e completed the first phase of our Boat Hall redevelopment project just before the start of the Christmas holidays. It has been a very complex undertaking involving the coordination of many different contractors, working at height, within a confined space and tight time constraints.

The Boat Hall is the Museum's main gallery. It accommodates a wide range of different activities at different times of the year. These include cross-arts programming, dinners, drink receptions, pop-up planetariums, science roadshows, large-scale object handling sessions, lectures, choirs, poetry readings, medal presentations, model engineering weekends, even mobile rock pools and popup classrooms, not forgetting it is also home to our Christmas Lanterns and Lights festival.

Funded by the Wolfson Foundation and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, the project will enable us to transform the interpretation of the National Small Boat Collection, deliver a strong sense of identity, place and narrative and anchor the museum experience. The new design, developed with Designmap, reimagines the principal gallery. It will reinvigorate our space, improve wayfinding, celebrate the architecture of the Museum, and help us to reduce our environmental footprint on our journey towards a sustainable and low carbon future.

Work began on site immediately after the October half term holiday. Since then, our primary focus has been on bringing the existing hanging boats down; cleaning, repairing and scanning the boats selected for the re-hang; suspending the new selection of boats and replacing all the high-level house and halogen spotlights with LED lamps.

We selected *Wanderer*, a 16ft Wayfarer class dinghy with a hull of double chine plywood and a Bermudan-sloop rig, to be suspended over our Boat Pool. Built in 1958 this dinghy was designed to be used for day sailing and racing, and yet Frank and Margaret Dye, a husband-and-wife team, sailed it across hundreds of miles of sea, on breath-taking adventures including a 650-mile passage in 1963 from Kinlochbervie in Scotland to Iceland, enduring gale force winds on the way. They also famously sailed the boat to Norway, almost reaching the Arctic circle. Frank and Margaret inspired many people to take up dinghy sailing and cruising.

We have also used this opportunity to achieve additional benefits, including additional facilities work such as the refurbishment of the Waterside Café windows, upgrades to the electrical infrastructure, creating more storage and display space around the RNLI Rescue Zone and completing the filming and photogrammetry of 18 boats, enhancing digital access and interpretation for visitors as well as providing a valuable collections resource.

Supported by DCMS/Wolfson Museums and Galleries Improvement Fund. ↻

The Wolfson\*  
Foundation



Department  
for Culture,  
Media & Sport



**Left** *Gweneue* being scanned as part of the filming and photogrammetry work done to 18 hanging boats.

**Right** *Venter*, a Ventnor 3 point hydroplane being lowered to the ground.

**Below** Slipper launch *Merk* being scanned.



Image The suspended boats in the Boat Hall.



Image Wanderer being positioned over the Boat Pool.



# Flying Wanderer

‘Offshore cruising in an open boat can be hard, cold, wet, lonely and occasionally miserable, but it is exhilarating too. To take an open dinghy across a hundred miles of sea, taking weather as it comes; to know that you have only yourself and your mate to rely on in an emergency; to see the beauty of dawn creep across the ever restless and dangerous ocean; to make a safe landfall – is wonderful and all of these things develop a self-reliance that is missing from the modern, mechanical, safety-cautious civilised world.’

Excerpt from *Ocean Crossing Wayfarer* by Frank and Margaret Dye.

In the true British spirit of exploration and adventure, Frank and Margaret Dye sailed their Wayfarer dinghy *Wanderer* over 40,000 nautical miles. This included perilous ocean crossings from Scotland to Norway and Iceland, and beyond the Arctic Circle. Following their personal dreams, Frank and Margaret Dye pushed dinghy sailing to the limit.

Designed by Ian Proctor in 1957, the Wayfarer class was intended for family sailing and camping. Special features include extensive storage space and a wide, flat floor to sleep on, under a canvas tent stretched over the boat.

Despite being seen by some as reckless, the Dyes prepared for each voyage meticulously. This helped them to survive gales, heavy seas, a broken mast, capsizing in a force 9 gale and difficult coastal navigation not usually associated with small boat sailing.

Frank and Margaret are no longer with us, but they have become famous amongst dinghy sailors. They would often come to the Museum and spend time visiting their first and favourite boat, while inspiring many others to take their dinghy sailing to a new level.

*Wanderer* can now be seen in the Museum’s Boat Hall, newly suspended in pride of place above the Boat Pool as part of our Boat Hall Re-rig project. 🚢

# Reflections

**Image** Their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales during a visit to the Museum in February.



**Image** A thank you card from one of the Museum's school groups.



# Our school's programme

**O**ur award-winning learning programme is the largest and most varied of its kind in Cornwall. Our dedicated team of Museum staff and volunteers deliver interactive and engaging curriculum workshops to approximately 50% of all primary schools in Cornwall.

Our broad programme of hands-on curriculum workshops are delivered within the Museum's galleries and celebrate our rich collection of objects and artefacts. The activities facilitate the range of learning styles and include object handling, storytelling and role-play challenges covering a range of topics. We offer fun and inspiring learning experiences, helping children develop an understanding of the world around them and encouraging exploration, imagination and collaboration.

## **Sandford Award**

'National Maritime Museum Cornwall is a worthy recipient of a third Sandford Award. There is evidence of excellent partnership working, and a wide range of activities for all ages and learning stages. Learning staff are enthusiastic and committed to delivering the very best experiences possible. The learning programmes are firmly rooted in the collections held there, along with the stories of Falmouth and the sea, making a visit to the Museum relevant to every school pupil in Cornwall.'

— Amanda Phillipson, Lead Judge, Sandford Award for Heritage Education



Images School children attending workshops as part of the Museum's award-winning learning programme.

‘Staff were amazing, jolly, happy, enthusiastic, patient considering our children with 1:1 support did talk over the staff. Workshops were engaging and right length of time. Level of talk to the children was perfect. One parent sent me a message to say: “It wasn’t great mum, it was REALLY great!”’

Class Teacher, Falmouth Primary School, Pirates: Fact and Fiction.

‘The programme was amazing! It engaged the children really well and gave them opportunities to react, respond and be active in their learning. The team were fantastic with the children and were incredibly knowledgeable. The content fitted perfectly with our curriculum objectives for our topic and that of the National Curriculum. The team were fantastic with all the children, including those with additional needs. They were so polite and understanding. The talk was aimed perfectly for Year 4 and had all the children engaged and wowed by the learning taking place.’

Class Teacher, St Meriadoc Junior Academy, Vikings: Sailors, Raiders and Traders.



**Image** Formal Learning Manager Seth Hall delivering a workshop in the Cornwall and the Sea Gallery.

‘Everyone loved the hands-on experience of building their boats, the teamwork, decorating their boats and of course racing them. It was GREAT FUN!! [The delivery style was] calm, clear and informative. It is wonderful to have the structured activities in such an impressive setting. Thank you!’

Class Teacher, Truro High School for Girls,  
Scrapheap Sailboat Challenge. 🔄



**Image** The Cross of Royal Sicilian Order of St Ferdinand and of Merit.



# New acquisitions

**Below left** The Cross of Royal Sicilian Order of St Ferdinand and of Merit.

**Below** A miniature silhouette of Commander Richard Moorman.



## Moorman collection

Earlier this year, we received a collection belonging to Commander Richard Moorman from one of his descendants. Born in Tregony, Cornwall, in 1784, Richard Moorman came from an illustrious naval family. Described as a 'hero of Cornwall', he entered the Navy in 1798 as a midshipman on board the *Monarch*. Moorman played an active role in the Napoleonic wars, from fighting in the Battle of San Domingo to accompanying Nelson in pursuit of the combined fleets to the West Indies.

One noteworthy item from this collection is the Cross of Royal Sicilian Order of St Ferdinand and of Merit. This prestigious medal was awarded to Moorman in 1813 by King

Ferdinand IV of the Two Sicilies after he was wounded by a musket ball while defending the port of Messina, Sicily, against the French. During the Napoleonic Wars, Sicily was the British base of operation in the Mediterranean and was occupied by the British from 1806 to 1814. This award was the equivalent of the British knighthood.

One of the other items within this collection was a miniature silhouette of Moorman. Images such as this were popular in the Georgian period. However, this example is unusual in that the torso is in colour, allowing us to see Moorman's naval uniform, and if you look closely, you can see that he is wearing his medal. ➡

### Huer's Horn

This unusual-looking instrument was used by huers to signal to the fishermen that they had seen a shoal of pilchards. The huers, or balkers (if you were in East Cornwall), were the men who stood on the cliffs, scanning the sea for the shoals of pilchards. They sheltered in their huts, and when a shoal was sighted, they shouted, 'Hevva! Hevva!' (Here they are!) through their horns, signalling those below to organise the boats and nets ready to catch the pilchards.

During the nineteenth century, when this horn was used, the pilchard industry was one of the keystones of the Cornish economy and the backbone of many coastal communities. The seasonal pilchard fishery supported communities across the county, providing a key export of fish, food and oil (known as 'train oil') to Mediterranean countries.

Surviving huer's horns are extremely rare, so we are privileged to add this to one already in our collection. As far as we know, these are two of only three still in existence. What differentiates this from our other horn is that we have a clear provenance and the name of the person who used it. The horn belonged to Robert Billing (1818-1898) from Gorran Haven, and Robert was the great-grandfather of Lewis Billing, whose fishing loft we have reconstructed in our Cornish Quayside gallery. ➡➡



### Cupid

This painting of *Cupid* was donated to the Museum by the great-grandchildren of the captain, William Richards, alongside a wealth of archival research into the crew and this wonderful photograph of them on the deck of *Cupid*. *Cupid* was a schooner owned by the merchants Messrs Bisson & Dawe, based in Falmouth, which frequently sailed to the northern coast of Spain and the Azores, bringing back items such as live cattle, potatoes, oranges, and guano.

In the summer of 1865, *Cupid* began importing live cattle from Coruña, Spain. Spanish cattle provided a cheaper source of beef for Cornwall than that bred locally, and schooners such as *Cupid* were making frequent trips from Penryn across the Bay of Biscay. Indeed, the Royal Cornwall Gazette reported that 'a large proportion of miners in Cornwall depended' on the live cattle trade – amongst other things, for pasties!

The cows were transported standing on top of the ballast built above the floors, and the journey could take up to three weeks. The live cattle trade with Spain only lasted until the early 1880s, and there are differing views on why it stopped. Some have suggested that it ended when there was public outcry against the conditions in which the cattle were transported, while others suggest that a drop in the price of British beef reduced the demand for overseas trade.

Accompanying the painting is this photograph showing the crew on the deck of the *Cupid*. Seated in the middle, Captain William Richards served as captain between 1876 and 1895 and was born in Penryn. 🐾



**Opposite** Painting of the *Cupid*.

**Below** This photograph shows the crew on the deck of the *Cupid* with Captain William Richards seated in the centre.

# Volunteers give 20 years

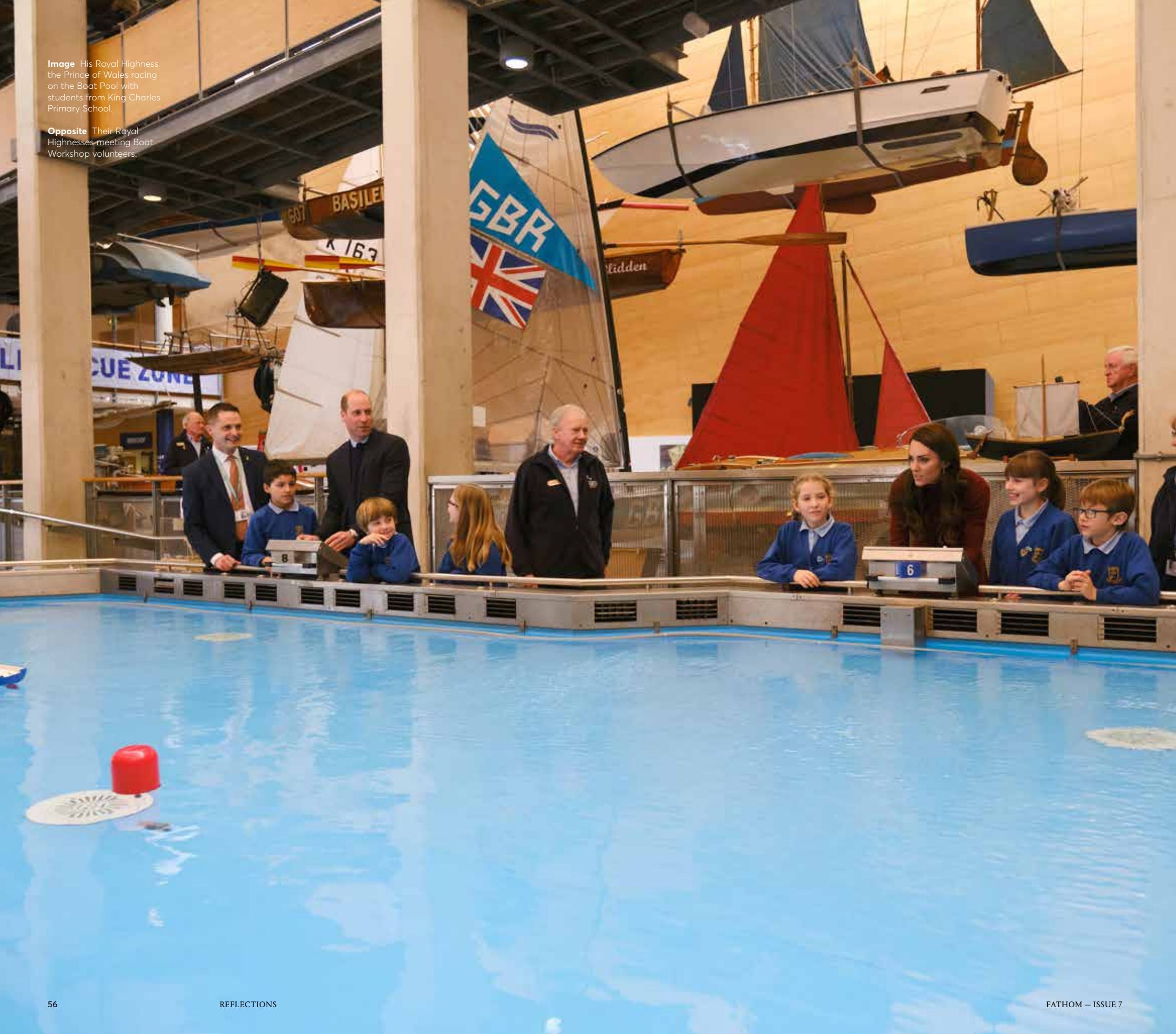
Image Museum volunteers marking 20 years of service this year.



**W**e are extremely proud and humbled that some of our original volunteers are still volunteering with us today, 20 years on from when the Museum first opened. We celebrated this extraordinary achievement with afternoon tea, scones, and lashings of clotted cream. At this event our Chairman, Simon Sherrard, awarded everyone who had reached this milestone with a certificate and badge. From welcoming visitors to restoring historic boats, managing the library, and enhancing our learning and creative craft activities, our volunteers support the Museum in numerous different ways. As we come to the end of 2023, we would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to them all. We've accomplished incredible things together over the past two decades and we couldn't have done it without them. 🌊

**Image** His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales racing on the Boat Pool with students from King Charles Primary School.

**Opposite** Their Royal Highnesses meeting Boat Workshop volunteers.



# Royal visit



**O**n Thursday 9 February we were honoured to welcome the Prince and Princess of Wales on their first official joint visit to Cornwall as the new Duke and Duchess of Cornwall.

During the visit Their Royal Highnesses learnt more about the rich maritime heritage of Cornwall and we introduced them to the National Small Boat Collection. The Duke and Duchess first spent time in the Museum's workshop where they met some of the team, including our volunteers, working on a number of boats in the collection. They were introduced to *Kiwi*, a 14ft sailing dinghy which was presented to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and The Duke of Edinburgh as a wedding present from the Royal New Zealand Navy.

The Royal Highnesses then met the team, along with students from Falmouth Marine School, and were taught how to add traditional copper rivets to another of the Museum's boats. After the lesson, The Duke and Duchess of Cornwall had a go at riveting, which the team now refer to as the 'royal rivet'.

The Duke and Duchess then tried their hand at sailing the boats on our Boat Pool with students from King Charles Primary School before heading onto Events Square to meet members of the public. ↻

# Understanding our visitors

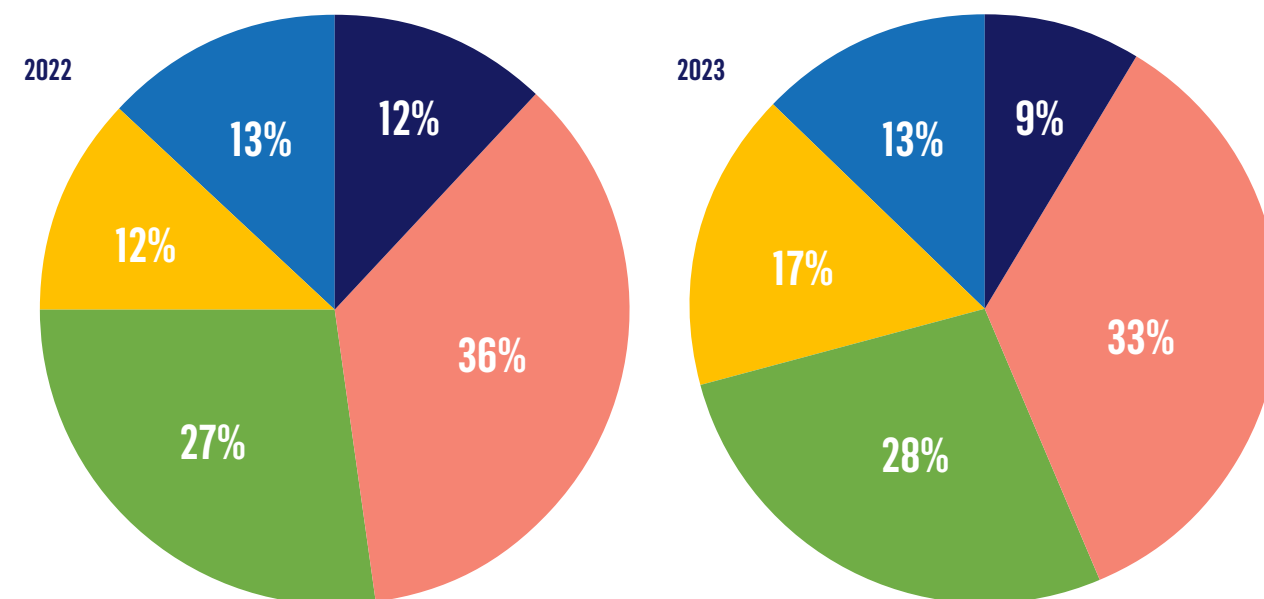
In 2022 we undertook a significant piece of visitor research and in 2023 we replicated this research to see how our activities and initiatives impacted our audiences and their thoughts on the Museum. Here are some of the key findings.

## SOCIAL DEMOGRAPHICS

We saw a 5% increase in visitors who fall within the C2, D and E social grades in 2023 compared to 2022.



Chart: Social demographics of the Museum's visitors, 2023 compared to 2022.

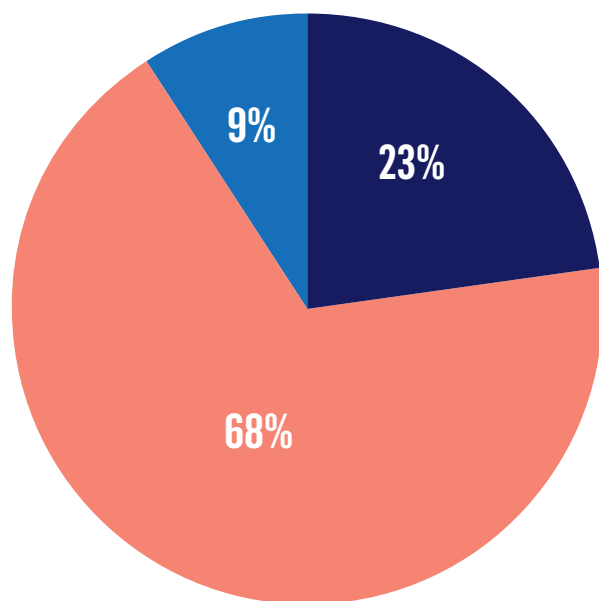
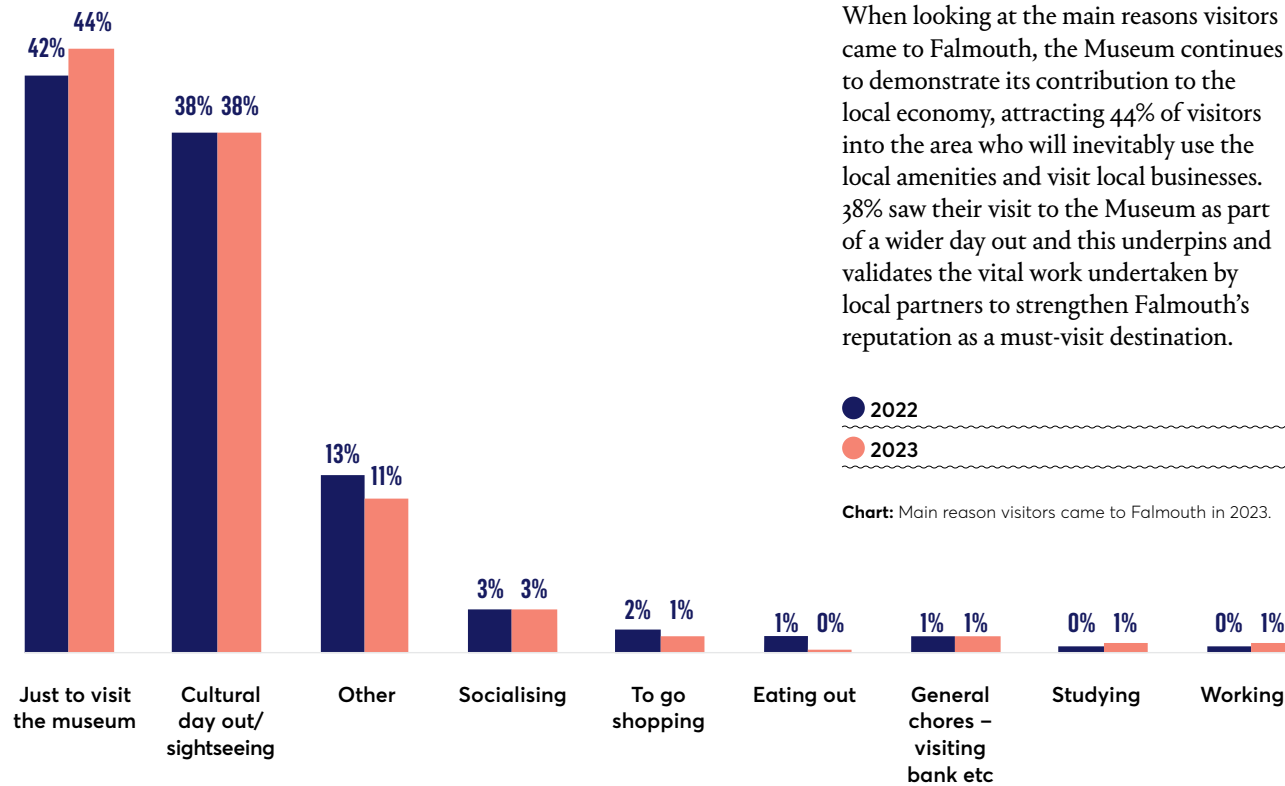


## SUPPORTING THE LOCAL VISITOR ECONOMY

When looking at the main reasons visitors came to Falmouth, the Museum continues to demonstrate its contribution to the local economy, attracting 44% of visitors into the area who will inevitably use the local amenities and visit local businesses. 38% saw their visit to the Museum as part of a wider day out and this underpins and validates the vital work undertaken by local partners to strengthen Falmouth's reputation as a must-visit destination.

● 2022  
● 2023

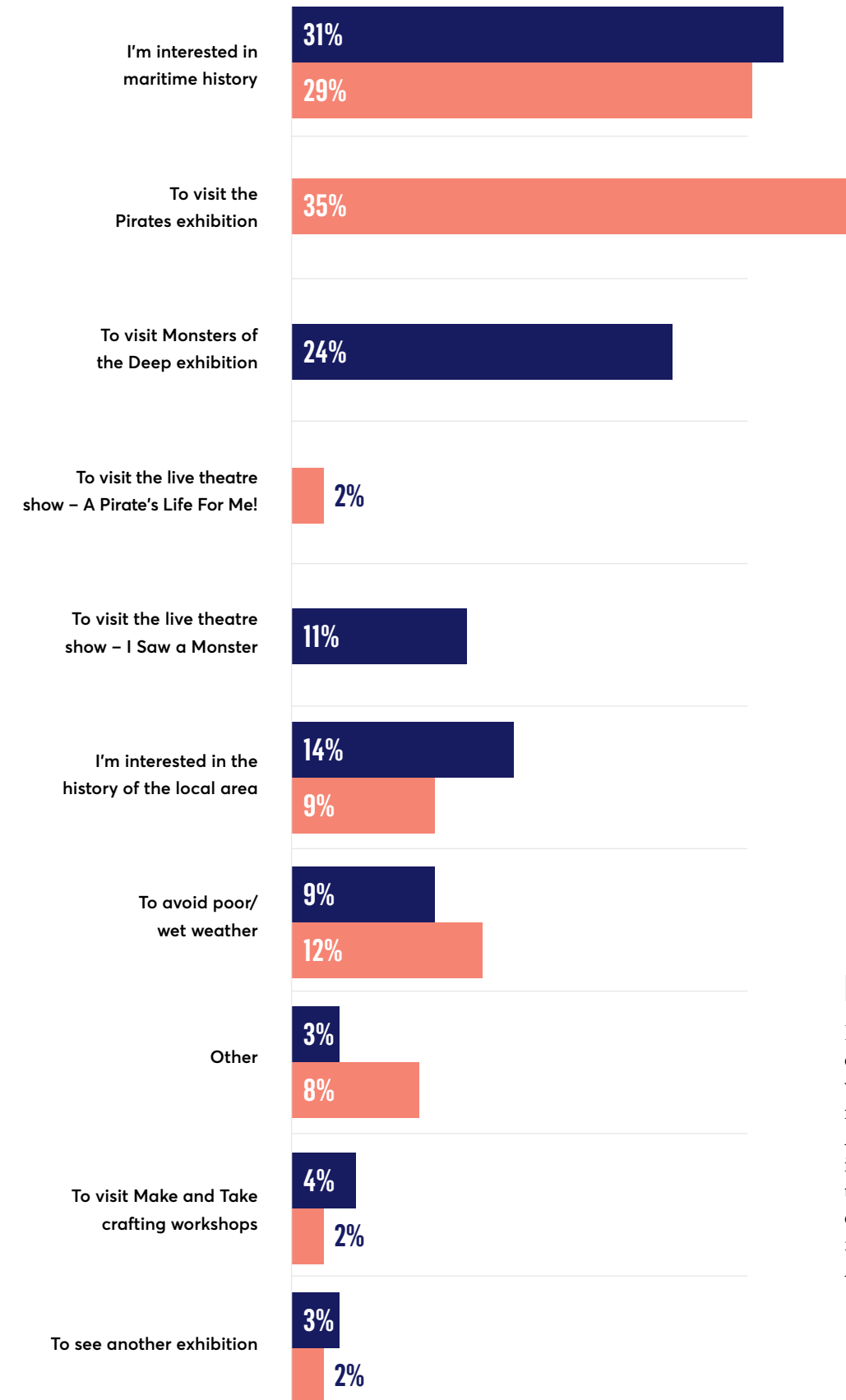
Chart: Main reason visitors came to Falmouth in 2023.



In 2023, 9% of visitors to the Museum came from overseas, a 5% increase on 2022. 68% were visiting Falmouth either as day trippers or holiday makers.

● Cornwall Residents 23%  
● UK 68%  
● Overseas 9%

Chart: Visitor locations in 2023.



## DRIVERS TO VISIT

Perhaps unsurprisingly, one of the main drivers to visit was to see the new major temporary exhibition *Pirates*. We saw an 11% increase in visitors wanting to see the latest major exhibition compared to 2022, when *Monsters of the Deep* was in its third year.

● 2022  
● 2023

Chart: Drivers to visit in 2023.

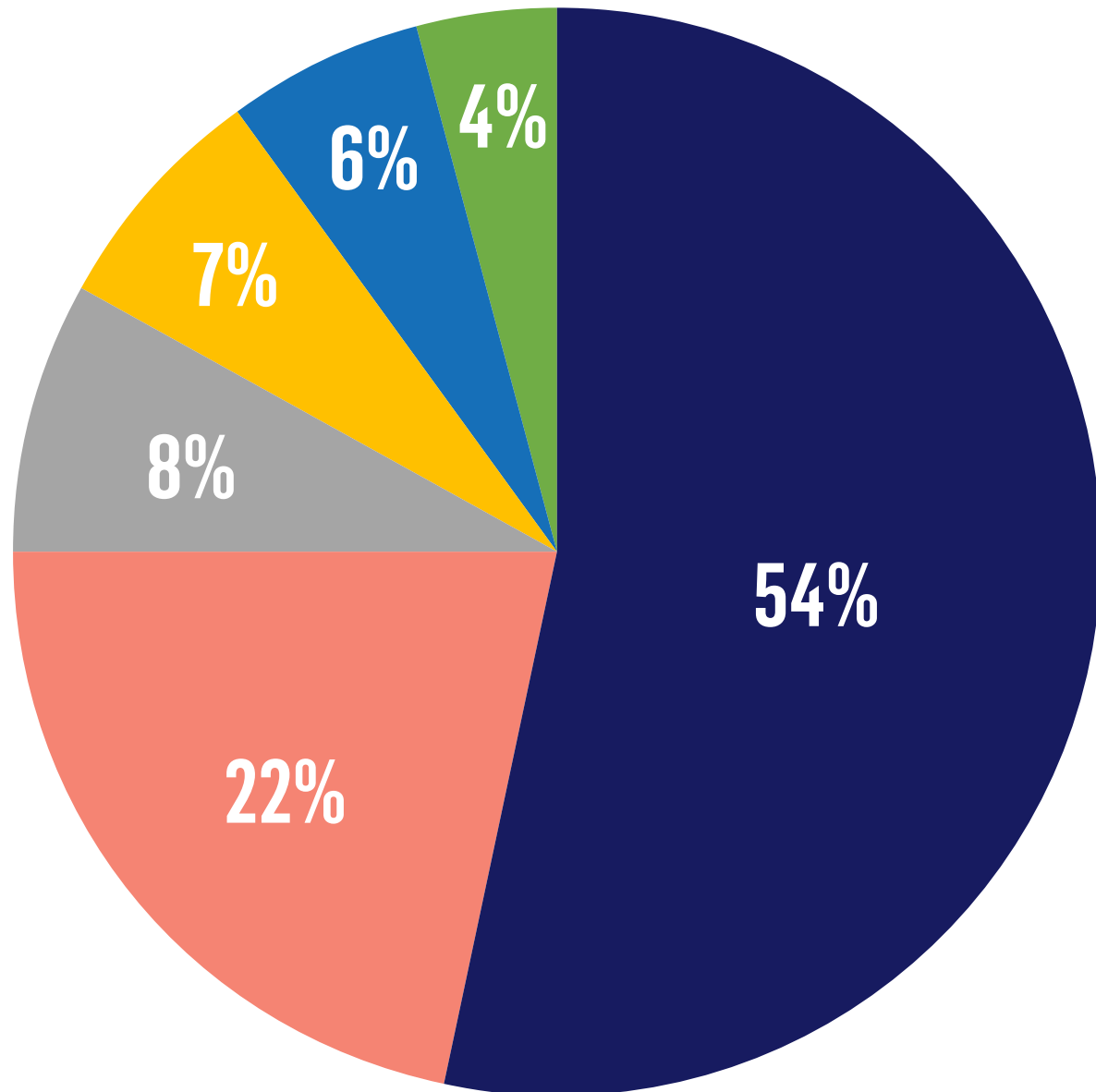
## SATISFACTION WITH THE MUSEUM

Satisfaction with the Museum remains strong, which can be seen by the 76% of visitors who are 'likely' or 'very likely' to revisit and the 89% visitors who were 'likely' or 'very likely' to recommend the Museum to friends or family.

Where there was dissatisfaction, our visitors were clear in where we could make amends, including improving digital interactive screens, reviewing our pricing policies, adjusting lighting levels and increasing seating provision in certain areas of the Museum. ↻

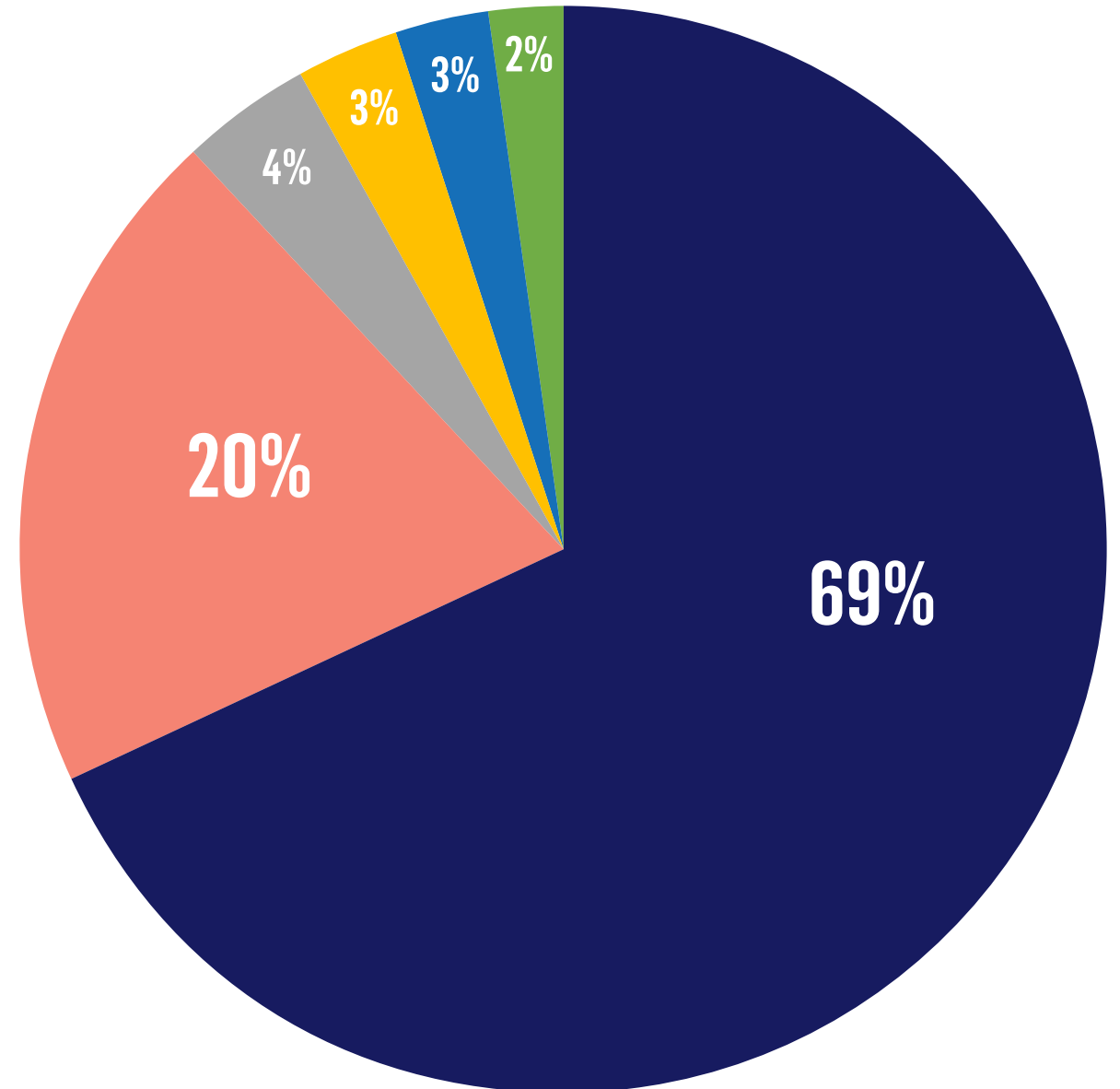
Very likely	54%
Likely	22%
Neither	8%
Unlikely	7%
Very unlikely	6%
Don't know	4%

Chart: Likelihood to revisit in 2023



Very likely	69%
Likely	20%
Neither	4%
Unlikely	3%
Very unlikely	3%
Don't know	2%

Chart: Propensity to recommend in 2023.





**Left** A map being fed into our new scanner.

**Below** A photoshoot for our new Online Shop taking place in the digital studio.

# New scanner & digital studio



**W**e recently installed a large format scanner, part funded by the Tanner Pheonix Trust, via the Cornwall Community Foundation, which has taken pride in our new digital studio. The scanner means we can now scan our large boat plans in-house, resulting in increased income generation and streamlined fulfilment of plan orders. Previously, library volunteers would transport plans to Truro and incur expenses for external scanning services.

Our newly established digital studio accommodates the digitisation of large plans and provides space for photographing objects from the collection. This versatile space has also been instrumental in creating product images used during the setup of our online shop. 📷

Image Rattlebox Theatre's Pirate Academy show, which took place during the Easter holidays.

# Connections



Image Chatham's installation of *Monsters of the Deep*.



# Monsters of the Deep at Chatham

The Museum's recent, popular and critically acclaimed *Monsters of the Deep* exhibition inspired enquires from different regional museums and art galleries as to the possibility of 'touring' it.

Although not planned or developed as a touring exhibition (which incurs additional costs in terms of modular design and fabrication, installation kits and manuals etc.), the Museum saw the opportunities in responding positively. It would allow us to reach new audiences, re-use exhibition materials in more sustainable ways and maximise the 'return on investment' of our assets. In this case our assets included not just the exhibition kit (panels, AV installations, replica touch objects, circus tents and walk-in ship's laboratories) but also the 'IP' (the graphic design artwork and concepts, marketing creatives, research and the exhibition's narrative content).

Following productive exploratory discussions with the team at Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust (CHDT), '*Monsters at Chatham*' was conceived not as a touring show but a genuine 'co-production' between two major, regional museums – with both organisations working together to solve the many, sometimes unexpected, practical, creative, and logistical challenges of reproducing the show in a very different space.

Museum exhibitions are special because they tell stories through objects. This proved one of the biggest challenges for the project, given that all the private, regional and national artefacts and specimens had to be returned to the original lenders. Nevertheless, with a can-do attitude from both teams, and on the back of some initial brokering from NMMC, Chatham was successful in securing the loan of all the original material (including the full-scale killer whale skeleton) as well as sourcing additional material from its own extensive collections.

All museums are facing real challenges (post-covid impacts, inflation, funding cuts and cost-of-living crisis to name the most obvious). We are being asked by the Government and major stakeholders to face these challenges by working in new ways, to be more entrepreneurial and collaborative across the sector. '*Monsters at Chatham*' is an innovative example of just such working, which has delivered real results not just for two major regional museums but audiences in both the SW and SE of England.

The overall footfall for the duration of *Monsters of the Deep* at Chatham was 53,181. 🐳

**Below** The Historic Dockyard of Chatham with *Monsters of the Deep* signage.

**Opposite** Visitors enjoying the exhibition's opening night.

‘Monsters of the Deep has been a tremendous success during its 2023 run at The Historic Dockyard Chatham. Adapting an exhibition that was not originally designed to be toured came with a number of challenges but overcoming these is a perfect example of how museums can work together to deliver impact for audiences across the country. We were able to work really flexibly with the National Maritime Museum Cornwall to make a number of subtle changes to the exhibition to not only make it work in a very different style of exhibition space, but also tell more local mythology of the sea that is relevant to the South East of England’

Paul Barnard, Deputy Chief Executive,  
Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust.



Image Illyria Theatre's  
*A Pirate's Life For Me!*  
summer show.



# Family programming

Following the launch of *Pirates*, our informal learning activities fully embraced the pirate theme. For the Easter holidays we ran *Pirate School*, where families could learn how to survive at sea and become the ultimate pirate captain. Over the summer holidays, we commissioned Illyria Theatre to produce *A Pirate's Life for Me!* This adventurous show was performed four times a day, every day of the summer holidays. Visitors were delighted that the show was also performed at weekends, which is a model the Museum would like to take forward for 2024. The wet summer proved especially busy for Make and Take activities and the team received a huge amount of positive feedback from visitors, many of whom were grateful for an indoor family activity. The team supported hundreds of families to make telescopes, cutlasses, parrots and pirate hats.

October half term saw the return of shadow puppet shows created by Reg Payn and Starbox Theatre, who brought a newly commissioned show about pirates. The team also created a 3D wooden puppet, 'Mr Maggots', who narrated the story, often to hilarious effect! The audience were invited to join in with some

of the singing and were provided with lyrics to take home.

For Halloween we held an afterhours event for families. Children were invited to journey around the Museum and there were various tricks and treats along the way, as well as the chance to make spooky masks in the Boat Hall. We were also joined by acclaimed Cornish actor Jenny Crowe who played a ghostly fisherwoman with tales about the legend of the Mermaid of Zennor.

Over Christmas, staff and volunteers collaborated to create and decorate a unique willow lobster pot Christmas tree for the Museum. The lobster pots were hand-crafted by Cadgwith Fisherman Nigel Legge. Inspired by the tree, the learning team delivered willow craft workshops in the Boat Hall throughout the festive period. We also worked with local illustrator Bex Bourne on a Museum trail that encapsulated what makes a Cornish Christmas.

There are many exciting plans in the pipeline for 2024. We will continue our ambition to deliver a creative programme of events that provides meaningful and memorable experiences for families. 🐙



**Left** The Rock Pool Project's mobile rock pool during spring half term.

**Below** A Pirate's Life for Me! and Pirate Academy tied in with the theme of our current major temporary exhibition.

Images The inclusive show transformed the Learning Centre with immersive neon lights.



# Arthur's Club



In early October the Museum worked with the local production company imPOSSIBLE, who have been the force behind the creation of Falmouth's International Arts Festival (FiaFest). As part of FiaFest, we provided a venue for the theatre show *Arthur's Club Live*. This show is a key word signed theatre production, masterminded by Cornish performer Rebecca Hulbert, who is on a mission to provide fully inclusive theatre for children and adults alike. We were delighted to be chosen as the venue for the show, which was also a chance for us to engage with community groups that may not have visited the museum before; 21 tickets were allocated to Falmouth and Penryn Welcome Refugees, along with 10 additional tickets allocated to low-income families. This represented 50% of the total audience. ☺



# Free admission for the most vulnerable

In response to the cost-of-living crisis, and as part of our wider community engagement and outreach work, the Museum has partnered with The Trussel Trust's Foodbanks and Transformation Cornwall, and set aside 500 free family day passes for families based in Cornwall who are in financial need. Through this free family ticket offer, we hope to open our doors to families who would otherwise be unable to afford entry. Each family ticket includes a day's entry to the Museum for up to two adults and four children.

## Foodbanks

One of the challenges we faced during the planning process was how we could best allocate the free tickets to families in need. Recognising the incredible work being carried out by The Trussel Trust, we identified foodbanks as a great way of connecting with communities throughout Cornwall. A further consideration was access to transportation and the associated costs. It's all very well families being offered a free ticket to the Museum but it's of no use if they can't reach us. As an initial solution, we have identified foodbank branches located in areas with good public transport links to Falmouth: Penryn and Falmouth, Truro and Helston.

The free family day passes look identical to a standard ticket and will be collected by Front of House staff on arrival. Entrance to the Museum will be granted on receipt of the ticket and tickets are valid up to and including Sunday 31 March 2024.

We have asked the wonderful team of foodbank volunteers to oversee the allocation of tickets. We have also asked them to collect very simple data such as numbers of recipients and postal codes in the hope of building up a picture of where the need is and where we might focus future efforts.

## Other charities and people we've supported throughout the year

Over the past year we've supported over 50 local charities, schools and community groups to help them raise money for equipment, building works, projects, events and activities that all directly impact Cornwall's communities. We have given away 100 tickets to the Royal Cornwall Sailing Trust who give young people the chance to sail on Falmouth's waters, and we've given free entry to refugee families who now call Cornwall home. ↶

**Image** An unfamiliar sight through our Tidal Zone windows. © Lewis M Jefferies

# Baby lobster release

**I**n August we partnered with The National Lobster Hatchery, a marine conservation charity based in Padstow. The partnership saw us release 620 baby lobsters outside our Tidal Zone windows, which look out under the sea into Falmouth Harbour. Using a team of divers, our visitors could watch the baby lobsters start their new lives in South Coast waters.

The feedback from the release has been overwhelmingly positive and the partnership has been shortlisted for a Cornwall Heritage Award – we find out the results in early 2024.

Thank you to The National Lobster Hatchery, Cornish Dive Centre, Rustler Yachts and Falmouth Harbour for helping make it happen.



Image The food range on our Online Shop.



# New online shop

With retail performance becoming ever more critical to the financial sustainability of the Museum, it felt that the time was right to embrace the ever-growing world of e-commerce, and so, on Wednesday 4 October 2023 we launched our first online shop. Not only are we now able to facilitate a purchase for customers who regret not buying the item they saw when they visited, but we are also essentially always open, ready to fulfil orders whenever our audiences make a purchase.

We worked hard to curate the ranges on offer, working with a local photographer, focusing on a range of unique selling points, tying our offer to our collection, themes and location. We've also ensured that customers understand that purchases support the Museum's core charitable objectives, and they have the opportunity to add a donation during the checkout process.

Of course, setting up the site is almost the easiest part! Having a site and having a site that customers can find within the vastness of the internet, let alone one that encourages a purchase, is an entirely different proposition. Behind the scenes a significant piece of work was carried out, and indeed will be ongoing, to ensure our site can be found.

Whilst we've set ourselves some realistic targets over the first three years of operation, based on industry benchmarking, we are optimistic for the future that this platform will enhance our customer experience, satisfaction and our overall brand.

Online retail is an opportunity for us to grow as an organisation and spread our stories and messages in a different way, whilst at the same time generate unrestricted funds for the Museum, expand our database and improve insights into our audiences. We hope you're as pleased as we are with the site!

**Opposite** Photographing the children's range.

**Below** A series of collection shots and the Online Shop as it appears on desktop.

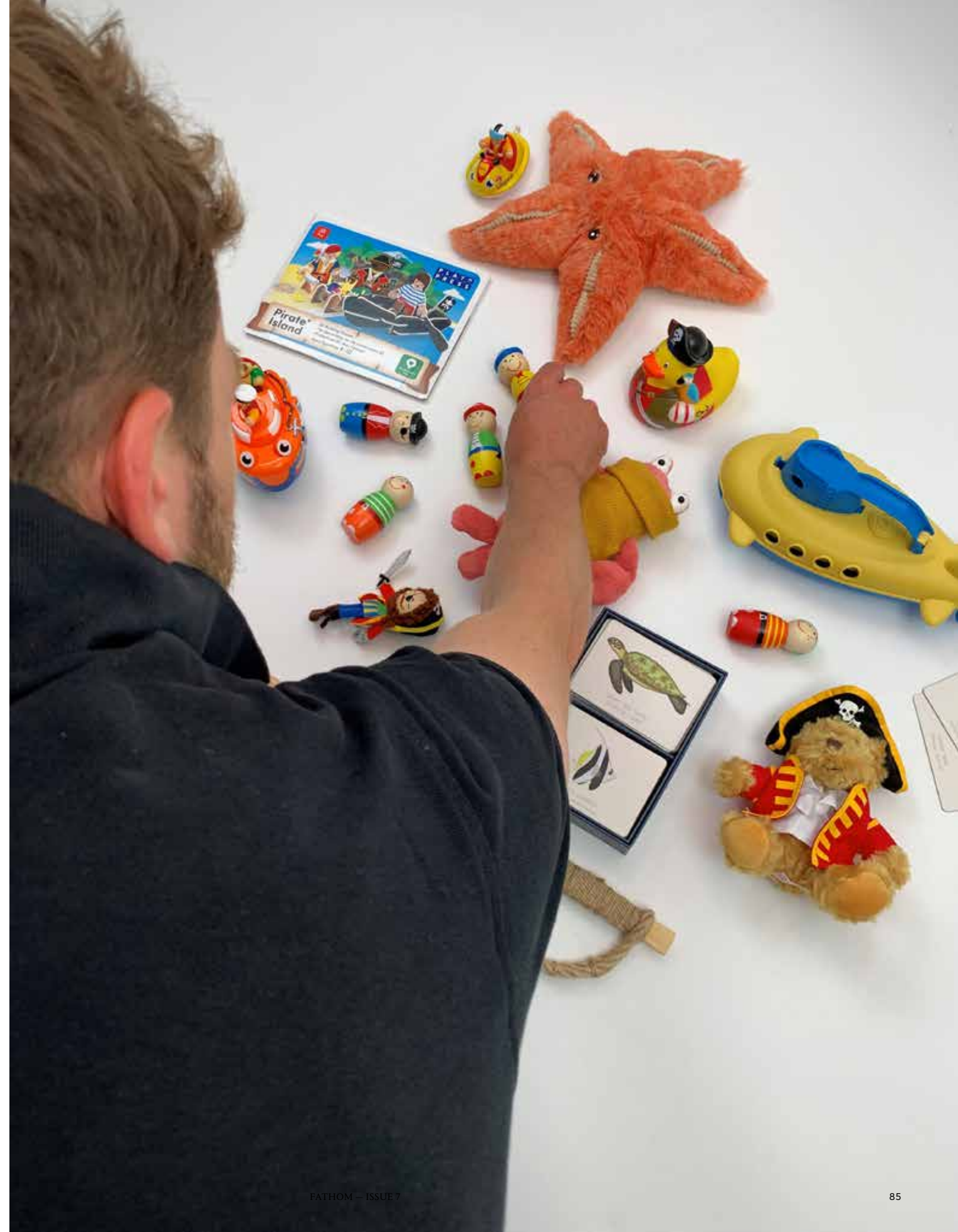
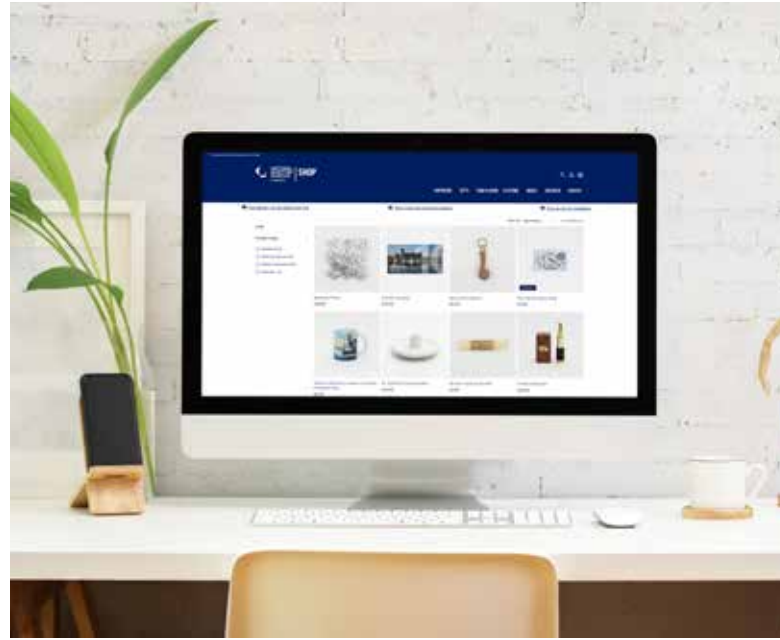


Image Bligh's Tribute being packed in the Museum off-site workshop.



# Bounty Launch

## *Bligh's Tribute* – the final leg

In a previous edition of *Fathom* (Issue 5) we reported the story of the replica launch we built for our exhibition *Captain Bligh: Myth, Man and Mutiny*. The original 23ft boat carried Bligh and the loyal members of his crew to safety in a 3,500 mile voyage which took 41 days to complete.

The trustees of the Bounty Museum, Norfolk Island, located off the east coast of Australia, agreed to buy the replica boat. The tiny island has a population of 2,000, many of whom are direct descendants of the *Bounty* mutineers and crew, so they were very excited by the prospect of owning this important little boat: however, they had to wait longer than expected to take delivery.

Having been carefully packed in a custom-built crate, *Bligh's Tribute* was collected from the Museum's boat store in December to begin its (14,500 mile) journey. There followed several delays during the voyage, resulting in its container ship arriving late in Brisbane, followed by breakdowns of the smaller cargo vessel serving Norfolk Island, which eventually had to be towed to the Island by tug.

It wasn't until 30 May that the launch finally arrived on the Island, which has no large port facilities, so everything is unloaded by hand or by crane. Even then the trustees were not allowed to open the delivery crate until the contents had been inspected, so it wasn't until 14 May that the launch finally arrived in the Museum's display area.

The next stage is for the boat to be housed in a new building as part of a permanent display, where the trustees assure us *Bligh's Tribute* will be well loved and looked after on Norfolk Island, home of the descendants of the *Bounty* mutiny. ➤➤



**Top left** *Bligh's Tribute* being packed in the Museum's off-site workshop.

**Bottom left** The crate carrying *Bligh's Tribute* being offloaded on Norfolk Island.

**Top right** The crate carrying *Bligh's Tribute* on the back of a lorry on Norfolk Island en route to the Bounty Museum.

**Bottom right** *Bligh's Tribute* being unpacked from its crate after arriving on Norfolk Island.

**Image** *Bligh's Tribute* being placed in the gallery at the Bounty Museum.



# Below Deck

Image Tall Ships illuminated at night. Photo by Michael Kelland.



# ABOUT NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM CORNWALL

## What we do

- Major exhibitions.
- Family learning.
- Award-winning education programme.
- Boat building and conservation.
- Preserve and promote Cornwall's maritime heritage.
- The Bartlett Maritime Research Centre and Library.
- Curate ambitious and unexpected exhibitions.
- Develop partnership projects with national and international museums, bringing new connections with world cultures to Cornwall.
- Bring artefacts from national and international collections and cultural heritage rarely seen outside London and the UK's other metropolitan centres.
- Spearhead unique collaborations between national organisations, collectors, artists and leading academics.
- Reach out to engage with all our communities, to include their voices, and their stories. We have ambitions to position ourselves at the forefront of challenging preconceptions about what museums can and should be curating and collecting.
- Aim to make Cornish maritime history inspiring for everyone.
- Bring new and diverse perspectives to maritime issues – and give them contemporary relevance.

Located beside the third largest natural deep-water harbour in the world – Britain's traditional gateway to the Atlantic and one of Europe's finest sailing waters – the building was custom designed and built on land that was once covered in the sheds of boat builders. These sheds inspired the design of the building which is clad in green oak.

There are 15 galleries over five floors. Exhibits explore the overwhelming influence of the sea on local, national and global history and culture. Visitors can climb to the top of the 100ft Lookout Tower for breathtaking panoramic views over Falmouth's harbour, docks and estuary. Then travel down to the Tidal Zone and go underwater to peer into Falmouth's harbour from a different perspective.

## Collections

The Museum's collections consist of a range of objects, boats, art, books and archives.

### The National Small Boat Collection

The National Small Boat Collection was originally developed by the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich. This is now housed in Cornwall where it has been extended by the addition of other craft. This collection is representative of boats from the UK and around the world. A maximum length overall of 30ft (9.144m) is set for the collection, although there are exceptions. A collection of objects and archives support the National Small Boat Collection.

### Cornish Maritime Collection

Much of the Cornish Maritime Collection came from the former Cornwall Maritime Museum in Falmouth. It contains objects, pictures, models and archives relating to the history of Cornwall and the sea, and Falmouth in particular.

### The Bartlett Maritime Research Centre and Library

The Museum's research work is led by The Bartlett Maritime Research Centre which incorporates the Bartlett Library. The library houses a diverse collection of maritime reference books, periodicals and archive material for public consultation and reference. The main themes are: Cornwall maritime history, British and international shipping, and the history of boats.

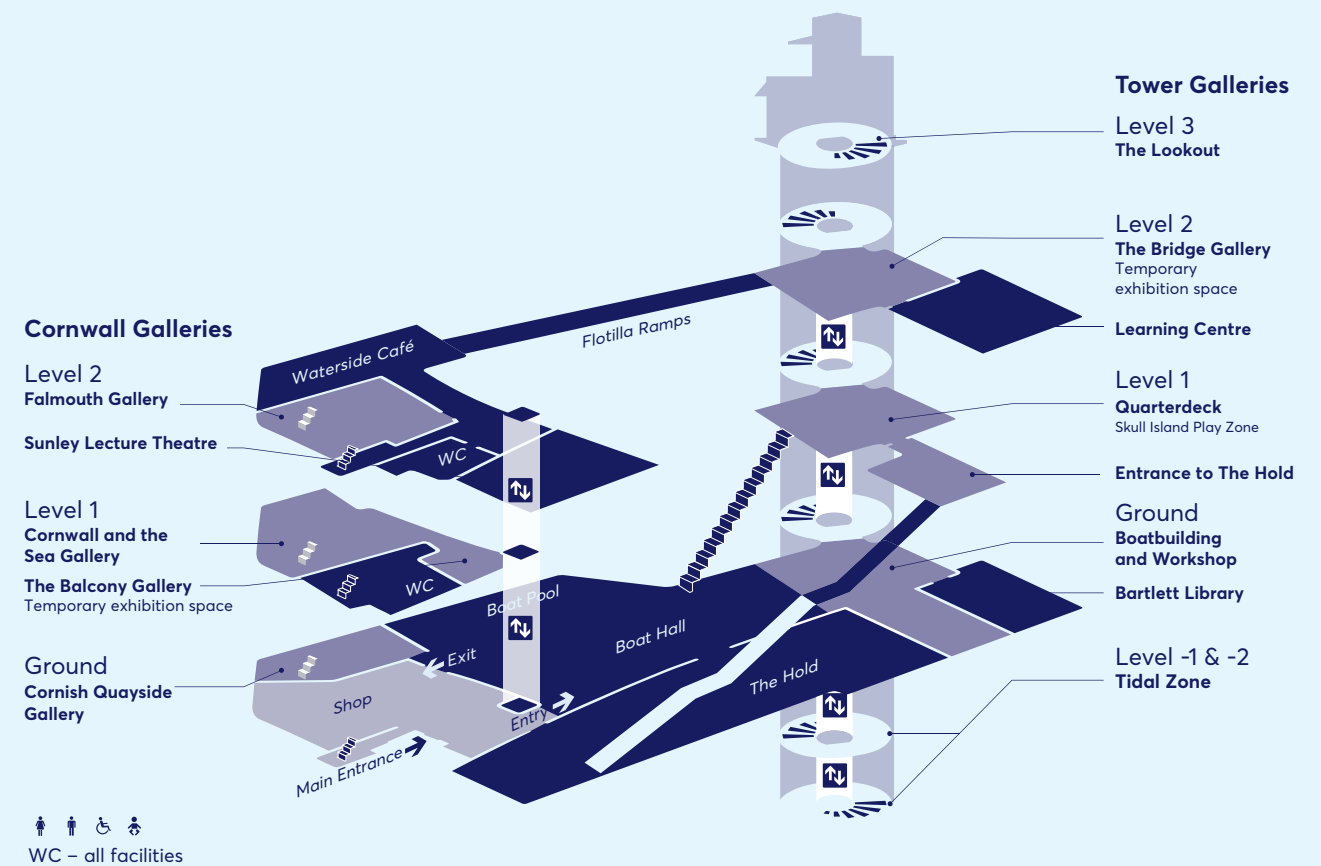
### Formal education programme

Our award-winning learning programme is the largest and most varied of its kind in Cornwall.

### Family programming

The Museum delivers 118 days of free family learning activities every year.

# MUSEUM MAP



# 2024 LISTINGS

Our 2024 programme is as ambitious as ever, providing a diverse range of events and exhibitions throughout the year.

Listings subject to change. Additional events, exhibitions and programming will be added during the year. To keep up to date with our latest news check [nmmc.co.uk](http://nmmc.co.uk) for details, sign up to our newsletter or follow us on social media.

## EXHIBITIONS

### Pirates

Running until December

Explore how writers and artists have shaped the image of the 'pirate' in popular culture – before discovering the real pirates from the Golden Age of Piracy.

### Tattoo: British Tattoo Art Revealed

Running until Sun 18 Feb

Last chance to see this critically acclaimed exhibition.

### The Museum at 20

Running until Sun 16 Jun

The Museum at 20 exhibition celebrates all that we're deeply proud of and uncovers some fascinating facts you may not know. It's a chance to get to know the Museum a little better and tell us how you see the 'museum of the future'.

### Kurt Jackson: RNLI Cornwall

Fri 15 March – Sun 3 Nov

Artist Kurt Jackson honours 200 years of the RNLI through a series of new work.

### Sunbeam 100

Fri 28 Jun 2024 – Sun 4 May 2025

An intimate exhibition celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Sunbeam one-design keelboat racing in Falmouth.

### Resilience

Sat 23 Nov 2024 – Sun 2 Nov 2025

An interactive, playful cluster of magical glass buoys at the centre of an evocative, multi-media exhibition on the resilience of Cornwall's coastal communities past, present and future.

## FAMILIES

### Science of the Sea

February half term:

Saturday 10 – Sunday 18 February

Hands-on science demonstrations inspired by the sea.

### The Cornish Caretakers and the Chest of Cornishness

Easter holidays:

Friday 30 March – Sunday 14 April

Discover the Cornish heroes from history that changed the world – starring Ed Rowe (Cornwall's Kernow King!).

### Rockpool Explorers

May half term:

Saturday 25 May – Sunday 2 June

Uncover the curious creatures found along the Cornish shore.

### Escape from Treasure Island!

Summer Holiday:

Monday 22 July – Sunday 1 September

Accompany our pirate crew on a wild adventure as they race to solve the clues on the map of Treasure Island.

### Silhouettes & Shadows

October half term:

Saturday 26 October – Sunday 2 November

Magical shadow puppet stories.

### Halloween at the Museum

Thursday 31 October

Storytelling, tricks and treats after dark.

### Lanterns & Lights

Christmas holidays:

Saturday 21 December – Sunday 5 January

A celebration of nautical light.

## LECTURE SERIES

### Women and the Navy in the Age of Sail with Dr Elaine Murphy

Thu 19 Sep, 7.30pm

### Mary Broad/Bryant – the creation of a Cornish legend Dr Charlotte MacKenzie

Thu 10 Oct, 7.30pm

## VISIT US

### Opening times:

Open every day of the year, 10am - 5pm, except Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Boxing Day.

### Admission fees:

See [nmmc.co.uk](http://nmmc.co.uk) for details or call us on 01326 313388

### Find us:

National Maritime Museum Cornwall  
Discovery Quay  
Falmouth  
Cornwall

Sat nav: TR11 3QY



[nmmc.co.uk](http://nmmc.co.uk)  
01326 313388

## NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM CORNWALL IS INDEBTED TO:

National Lottery Heritage Fund, Emergency Heritage Fund  
 Arts Council England Culture Recovery Fund  
 DCMS/Wolfson Museums and Galleries Improvement Fund  
 Weston Culture Fund (Garfield Weston Foundation)

The Headley Trust  
 Coastal Community Fund  
 Lois Cumbers Foundation  
 The Tanner Trust



Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
 ENGLAND**



The Wolfson\*  
 Foundation



## OUR VOLUNTEERS

We are extremely grateful for the continued support of our volunteers whose time and effort contribute so much to the Museum.

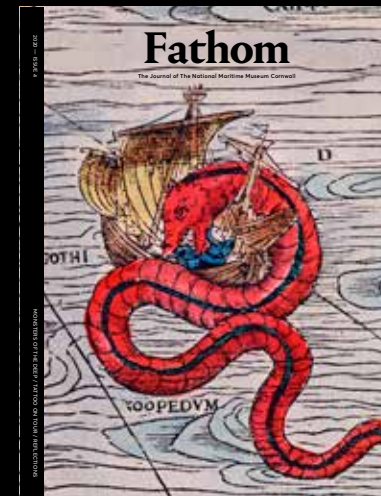
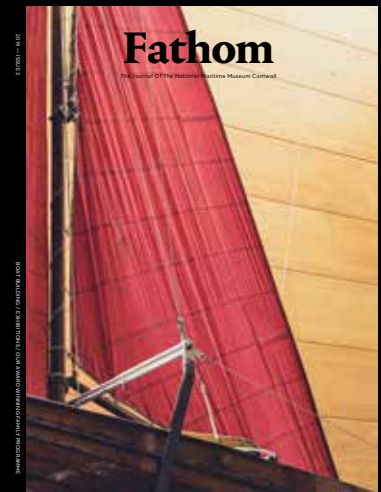
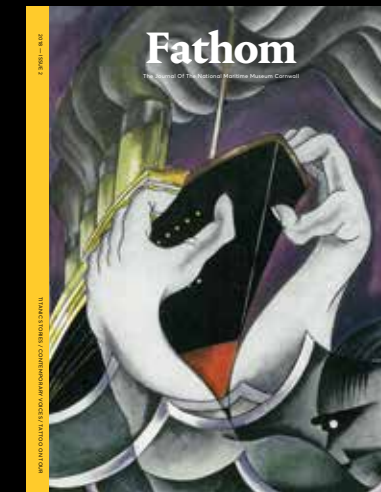
Our crew of volunteers are highly valued members of the Museum team, helping in almost every aspect of what we do and contributing their time and skills to the successful running of the Museum, working alongside our staff team.

## OUR TRUSTEES

- Alexandra Bolitho (*President*)
- Simon Sherrard (*Chairman*)
- Rob Holmes (*Chair, Audit and Finance Committee*)
- Peter Davies
- Lord Falmouth
- Coralie Green
- Michael Griffiths
- Sam Hunt
- Dame Shan Morgan
- Anthony Pawlyn (*retired September 2023*)
- Ben Statham-Wilkins
- Helen Stemberidge (*retired September 2023*)
- Simon Tregoning
- David Williams (*d. October 2023*)

## CORPORATE MEMBERS

Thank you to our Corporate Members:  
 A & P Falmouth, Falmouth Harbour  
 Commissioners, Hayes Parsons, Pendennis.



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# Fathom

The annual journal of writing, art and photography  
from National Maritime Museum Cornwall.

Inspired by and expanding on the Museum's  
permanent collections, temporary exhibitions and  
wider cultural connections, the magazine brings  
together essays, articles, unseen imagery and  
artefacts, which further bring to life the award-  
winning National Maritime Museum Cornwall's  
nautical heritage and collections housed within its  
landmark building in Falmouth, Cornwall.

