

SCARBOROUGH MARITIME HERITAGE CENTRE

ANNUAL REPORT

April 2016 – April 2017



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Registered Charity 1144532

Company number 0675517

The SMHC is managed, overseen and administered in accordance with its charitable constitution and its memorandum of association and articles of association.

Directors

M. Vesey, R. L. Rowley, D. Normandale, J.R.F. Spencer.

Trustees

M. Vesey, R. L. Rowley, D. Normandale, J.R.F. Spencer, Captain P Simpson MN, Huw Roberts, Bob Roberts.

Committee

M. Vesey, R. L. Rowley, D. Normandale, J.R.F. Spencer, L. Auckland, J. Roberts, A Roberts, J King.

President

Mr J Martin Johnson JP, BA, IEng, IMarEng, MIMarEST

Patrons

Earl of Burford, Lady Caroline French Blake, Lord John Beauclerk

Objectives

To educate the public about the maritime history of Scarborough. To record and preserve the skills and knowledge of our fishing, boat building and sea faring community that are being lost. To carefully store, restore and display all memorabilia and exhibits donated to the Centre. To stage exhibitions and events that involve all of the community.

Chairman's report

The trustees have monitored the activities undertaken by the SMHC from April 2016 to March 2017 and agree that they meet the charitable aims of educating the public. Our principal activity has been the provision of exhibitions and to give talks to community groups and schools. Volunteers from the community have been involved in all aspects of our work, helping them gain new skills and confidence. We welcomed over 7000 visitors in our new premises, double the number of the old site. Our visitor's guest book has many praiseworthy comments recorded in it and the Trip Advisor website has given us a 'Certificate of Excellence' rating.

In June we were presented with the Queen's Award for volunteering, the highest accolade for any volunteer group in the UK. Our chairman and vice-chair went to Buckingham Palace and a group of volunteers were met by the Lord-Lieutenant of North Yorkshire. He later visited the new premises in Scarborough.

The SMHC were also accredited as a member of the UK Children's University Network. This organisation promotes social mobility by providing access to high quality out-of-school hours learning activities for children aged 7 to 14. The CU works with community organisations and creates 'Learning Destinations'. The goal is to raise aspirations, boost achievement and foster a love of learning. An important principle is that participation by children is voluntary and is intentionally different to 'normal' schoolwork. The scheme requires a degree of engagement by parents, carers and the wider family. Each child involved has a 'Passport to learning' that is stamped by a volunteer at the SMHC when the child has completed the task sheet we have prepared. This fun fact finding quiz sheet encourages children to explore the exhibits and find out about Scarborough's maritime heritage. They are encouraged to try on traditional fishing costumes, make knots and draw Scarborough's town seal.

During the year volunteers have given talks about maritime history to thirty community groups and schools, totalling 1000 people.

Members of the public continue to donate valuable memorabilia that our volunteers catalogue, preserve and display. Volunteers help answer family history enquiries from local people and from around the world via the Internet.

We have distributed over 10,000 publicity leaflets throughout the borough of Scarborough and had dozens of newspaper articles printed about us.

Our website continues to receive over 4000 viewings a month.

Events

In April one of our patrons, Lord John Beauclerk, officially opened the new centre and spoke at our AGM. Our public exhibition focused on some rare 100 year-old glass plate pictures showing various aspects of the town's maritime history.

From May to September our exhibition looked at the centenary of the naval battle of Jutland and the Scarborough men involved.

In July we put on another exhibition of maritime history for Scarborough's Seafest event on the west pier that attracted over 10,000 visitors.

From September to December our exhibition focused on three local characters that were connected with the maritime world. We displayed their old diaries giving the public a look at first hand accounts of life at sea.

In November our volunteers received more training in museum artefact preservation and cataloguing thus completing our Heritage Lottery Fund grant commitments. We also held a training day in partnership with several other national heritage organisations to train people in recording UK heritage sites.

Over the Christmas period the Centre underwent a deep clean ready for the New Year. From January to April 2017 our exhibition was about Yorkshire's connections with Antarctica.

Funding

Thanks to the Heritage Lottery Fund grant we equipped our new premises with excellent display and archive equipment as well as producing new publicity leaflets and banners. We received donations from visitors and members as well as from giving talks to groups. Our tenant continues to pay our Charity Bank mortgage loan.

Our major annual expense as always is the rental of an off-site storeroom where we keep the larger objects in our collection along with spare books, paintings and boat models.

The SMHC is a member of the Welcome to Yorkshire tourism agency and the Coast & Vale Community Action group. The SMHC has public liability insurance and we have full risk assessment and health & safety policies in place.

We would like to thank everyone who supported us this year and especially our volunteers who gave up their valuable time to make it all possible. We look forward to another exciting and year ahead.