

SCARBOROUGH MARITIME HERITAGE CENTRE

ANNUAL REPORT

April 2015 – March 2016



45 Eastborough, Scarborough, North Yorkshire, YO11 1NH.

Tel 01723 369361.

E-mail: scarboroughmaritime@yahoo.com

www.scarboroughsmaritimeheritage.org.uk

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, Cllr. C. Challen, Captain P Simpson MN, Huw Roberts.

Committee

M. Vesey, R. L. Rowley, D. Normandale, J.R.F. Spencer, L. Auckland, J. Roberts, A. Hargreaves, 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 and to establish a permanent home that is open to the public for our collection and exhibitions.

Chairman's report

The trustees have monitored the activities undertaken by the SMHC from April 2015 to March 2016 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 have welcomed some 3000 visitors in the past year and once again have been given some excellent comments recorded in our visitors' book.

The major event this year was the purchase and refurbishment of a building enabling us to move out of rented premises. Many people from the local community helped with decorating and some young men on the community payback scheme also helped. The building has a two bedroom flat above the maritime centre and this has been rented out to help pay back the Charity Bank loan. Funding for the new premises came from local benefactors, our savings and a loan from the Charity Bank. A list of donors can be seen on our website and on a panel in the new centre.

Thanks to Arts Council funding, passed on to us by the Scarborough Museums Trust, we have been able to pay for a complete re-design of our website so it is compatible with mobile phones, ipads and tablets. The new streamlined look should make searching for subjects much easier and helps highlight the 1914 centenary information.

From April to July: The exhibition was put on in partnership with the Scarborough Sub Aqua Club. They displayed artefacts, photographs and information about a German U-Boat that sank twenty-one vessels along the Yorkshire Coast in WW1.

In July we put on a large exhibition of maritime history for Scarborough's Seafest event that attracted 10,000 visitors. We also helped a local writer interview retired fishermen. The material was used in a play put on for the annual Coastival Festival in February 2016. Our 'travelling' exhibition about the 1914 bombardment of Scarborough was put on display at the York Castle Museum.

From July to November: We put on an exhibition about maps and charts. This was the first exhibition organised by one of our volunteers who is responsible for cataloguing and indexing all our maps and charts.

In November and December volunteers helped decorate and equip the new premises in time for opening in January 2016. The new exhibition focused on some of the important aspects of the town's history and highlighted some of our artefacts that have not been on show before due to restrictions on space. In February we welcomed our first visiting group, from the local Civic Society.

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During the year volunteers have given talks about maritime history to nearly two dozen community groups and schools.

Our volunteers continued to digitize and catalogue photographs, documents and artefacts that have been donated by the public. Volunteers continued to answer family history enquiries received from local people and from around the world via the Internet.

During the year we have distributed over 10,000 publicity leaflets throughout Scarborough and had more than a dozen newspaper articles printed about us.

Funding

In January 2015, we applied for Scarborough Council 'Voice Your Choice' funding. We competed alongside twenty other community groups and came first with our project to preserve and promote a collection of glass plate slides. Volunteer Michael Knaggs helped restore the images and make them into a set of postcard and greetings cards that the public can purchase. The images have also been used on our website and in outreach talks to groups.

We applied for and gained a £10,000 Heritage Lottery Fund grant to equip the new premises with display and archive equipment. This has meant we can now display many more of our donated artefacts that have been in storage. However, we continue to rent and share a storeroom in the old town with the Archaeological Society where we keep the larger objects in our collection

We organised in partnership with the Scarborough Sub Aqua Club, a pie and peas musical supper. A local charity-supporting band gave their services for free and food was donated by Morrison's supermarket and the Sub Aqua Club. Donations from members, talks and visitors continue to come in and we made our annual gift aid claim from HMRC.

There were 48 paid up members during 2015 - 2016. The SMHC is also 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 all the volunteers for giving up so much of their time during the past year and to the members and donors who have supported us financially or otherwise. We look forward to another exciting and challenging year ahead.