

# Your Museum Needs You!

The Scottish Fisheries Museum at Anstruther opened as an independent, self-funding institution in 1969. Since then, its collection has grown substantially, the site has been greatly expanded and major internal alterations have enabled access for all.

The Museum's displays cover virtually every aspect of the Scottish fishing industry and community, both at sea and on shore. The variety and beauty of old fishing boats are shown in its models and original vessels, including the *Reaper* and *White Wing* that still go to sea. Social history is explored via personal possessions, textiles, domestic equipment and artworks. Reserve collections are held in store where they are available for research and provide the focus for regular temporary exhibitions on a range of topics. New exhibits seek to reflect and inform contemporary issues such as the impact of environmental change on the fishing industry.

From the start, the Museum's ambition was not merely to tell a local story but to include the fishing heritage of the East Neuk within a national context and the Scottish Fisheries Museum is now acknowledged as one of Scotland's national industrial museums. David Corner, the Chairman of the Museum Trust, recognises this extraordinary achievement and points out that 'There are not many towns as small as Anstruther that host a national museum and not many success stories that have been so much the result of the enormous efforts of the large number of local volunteers who run our shop and ticket office, assist our curators in preparing exhibitions and documenting and researching the collections, repair and crew our boats, build our new website, work away as trustees and turn their hands to a whole range of jobs that need to be done'.

Today's Museum, largely because of this almost unique communal effort on the part of staff and volunteers, is in good health and, having learned to live with the difficult financial circumstances in which we all currently find ourselves, has ambitious plans for future development. It wants, therefore, to expand its volunteer workforce by asking new and old friends to take on a variety of roles in, for example, our on-going marketing campaign aimed at increasing visitor numbers and our new fundraising projects aimed at supporting exciting new developments. These tasks could involve organising the overall effort, arranging and circulating mailings, liaising with tourist operators, helping to write press releases, conducting visitor surveys, enhancing our presence on the web and in social media, planning and organising fundraising activities, contacting businesses and trusts or recognising the contributions of our patrons. In addition, there are new opportunities to receive training as a visitor guide or to organise and develop our educational outreach, especially if you have teaching experience or simply enjoy talking to visitors. Furthermore, help is needed with technical jobs around the Museum, involving electrical, painting and joinery work, dealing with contractors or just providing a willing pair of hands.

In all these roles and any others which new volunteers suggest that they might undertake, relevant areas of expertise would be most welcome but, in most cases, enthusiasm and willingness to learn and a desire to contribute to a community-based national museum are all that is needed. Our experience is that such involvement can provide, for volunteers of all ages, significant personal satisfaction, a chance to meet new people or enhance a CV. Enquiries can be directed to Simon Hayhow (Director) or Linda Fitzpatrick (Curator) on 01333 310628 or at ([simon@scotfishmuseum.org](mailto:simon@scotfishmuseum.org)) or at ([linda@scotfishmuseum.org](mailto:linda@scotfishmuseum.org)) or you can go to the 'Support Us' section of our website [www.scotfishmuseum.org](http://www.scotfishmuseum.org) to find the 'Contact Form' under 'Become a Volunteer'.

The Museum would be delighted to introduce all potential volunteers, whatever amount of time they can commit, to its staff, activities and volunteer community to explore how they might get involved, and, even if personal circumstances do not permit individuals to volunteer, to welcome them to the many exhibitions and events organised by the Museum of which some of those to be held in 2013 are listed below:

## EXHIBITIONS

### 26<sup>th</sup> October to 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2013 ***Fishy Tales***

An exhibition produced in partnership with the University of Dundee, using technology to share the stories and cultures of fishing communities from Canada, India, Portugal and Scotland.

### 16<sup>th</sup> February – 5 May : ***Science and Sea Monsters***

An exhibition investigating the existence of sea monsters and exploring the science behind the myths, curated by Dr Charles Paxton of the University of St Andrews.

### 10 May – 9 June : ***Hard Lives – Hard Feet***

A multi-media installation by Jock Ferguson inspired by, and incorporating, a collection of Victorian boots and shoes and other material dredged up at West Wemyss harbour, Fife.

### 20 June – 25 August : ***Home from the Sea***

An exploration of fisherfolk housing, looking at the locations, materials used and influences on design that have created the distinctive houses lived in and loved by fishing communities the coast.

### 1 September – 5 January : ***The Art of Sam Smith: Boats, Beasts and Beauties***

An exhibition of the work of artist and toy maker Sam Smith who specialised in boats and harbour scenes. Curated by Andrew Demetrius of the University of St Andrews.

## EVENTS

### 8 – 17 February : ***Your Paintings Festival***

Turn detective and identify the paintings from the clues we give you. You can also see the paintings that aren't generally on show projected onto our big screen.

### 15<sup>th</sup> March to 14<sup>th</sup> April : ***National Science Week and Easter Festival***

Family fun in the museum with our Easter Chick Hunt plus arty activities, talks, demonstrations and craft workshops inspired by our exhibition *Science and Sea Monsters*.

### 8<sup>th</sup> June : ***Museum Open Day***

Family fun in the museum with a Fisher lad & lass Ceremony, model boat exhibition, activities, chance to visit the *Reaper* and much more, plus free entry to the Museum

(Do check the Museum website [www.scotfishmuseum.org](http://www.scotfishmuseum.org) or information boards for more details on the events listed, additions to the programme, and details of the monthly art exhibitions in the Merchant's Room.)