

### 1. *Darwin 200- A Celebration Project*

- 1.1 A successful application to the Heritage Lottery Fund has led the gallery to receive an award of £50,000 to undertake a year long project to celebrate the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Charles Darwin (1809-1882). The vast majority of the money will be spent in Cornwall and will be for additional activities to those funded by Falmouth Town Council.
- 1.2 The most important journey of the nineteenth century – perhaps the most important journey ever – was undertaken by Charles Darwin on *The Beagle* between 1831 and 1836. Little known is the fact that Darwin sent specimens throughout his voyage back to this country via Falmouth and the packet ships. *The Beagle* finally returned to Falmouth on the 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1836, and so the town is central to the Darwin story and the publication of *The Origin of Species*, both of which are celebrated worldwide.
- 1.3 The project will be mounted in partnership with Newquay Zoo, Penlee House Gallery & Museum and University College Falmouth. The partnership will host a season of exhibitions, events and community activities as part of the Darwin 200 celebrations.
- 1.4 Falmouth Art Gallery is dedicating its 2009 exhibitions programme to the celebrations with four Darwin themed exhibitions. These will be *Voyages of Discovery* (14 Feb – 18 April), *Species* (25 April – 27 June), *A Day at the Zoo* (4 July – 5 September) and *Expressions in Man and Animals* (12 September – 7 November). John Dyer will be artist in residence for the Cornish Darwin 200 project working on a project at Newquay Zoo. Important Cornish artists including Susan Boaf, Vince Bevan, Robert Bradford, Kurt Jackson, Oxana Mazur, Paul Spooner, Carlos Zapata, and Keith Newstead will all exhibit work as part of the project. A special feature will be the showing of *Underwater Cornwall* photographs by award winning Mark Webster and the launch of his new book during the exhibition *Voyages of Discovery*.
- 1.5 The gallery is also planning an accompanying community education programme that will involve exciting animal and plant themed activities.
- 1.6 Newquay Zoo is holding a series of exciting events throughout 2009 including Darwin themed trails, exhibitions and family workshops. Falmouth artist John Dyer is to become the zoo's artist in residence during the celebrations that will result in an exhibition of his animal inspired works.

- 1.7 Penlee House Gallery & Museum will be celebrating Darwin's birthday with an exhibition that looks at the flora and fauna of Cornwall through the eyes of artists, photographers, scientists and collectors. *Wild Cornwall* (21 March – 13 June 2009) will combine beautiful imagery with fascinating fact utilising pieces from the gallery's own collection as well as loans from public and private collections.

### **3 'Along Shore Fishermen' by Charles Napier Hemy RA RWS**

- 3.1 The gallery has successfully saved an important masterpiece for Cornwall. Staff are delighted to have secured *Along Shore Fishermen* by Charles Napier Hemy RA RWS (1841-1917) after three previously unsuccessful auction attempts to acquire a major masterpiece by Falmouth's first Royal Academician.
- 3.2 After discovering the work was coming up for auction staff organised a hasty rescue bid and successfully secured funding from the Art Fund and the V&A Purchase Grant Fund, who acted quickly to make the acquisition possible. Deadlines were tight and gallery staff only heard they had secured the necessary funding a couple of hours before the sale.
- 3.3 The painting was purchased at auction for £20,000 plus £4,000 commission which was within the auction estimate. The auction took place on a day when the city was in shock from the Lehman collapse and more than £50 billion was wiped off the value of blue chip stocks so the saleroom was unusually quiet.
- 3.4 Charles Napier Hemy was the leading maritime painter of his generation. He was appointed Official Painter to the Royal Yacht Squadron and was a prolific exhibitor at the Royal Academy showing one hundred and fifty-five paintings during his lifetime. He settled in Falmouth in 1881, and produced the majority of his finest works here. He built a floating studio and made countless studies of wave formations. Sir Frank Brangwyn RA wrote: '*His knowledge of the sea was superb. As a draughtsman of wave forms he stands alone.*'
- 3.5 '*Along Shore Fishermen*' shows Hemy's masterly ability to capture the sea at its best. It depicts in detail St Anthony's lighthouse at the mouth of the Fal built in 1834, with its distinctive octagonal tower designed by James Walker. The tower was also fitted with a large external brass fog bell, which at two tons, was the heaviest ever used in a British lighthouse.
- 3.6 In a letter Hemy commented on the painting: "*I painted it off St. Antony lighthouse on board my boat the Vander-Meer and I think I have caught something of the freshness of the sea. The net is what they call a trammel,*

*and is set overnight and hauled in the morning, and brings up mostly flat fish, John Doreys, Red Mullet. The fishermen never go out into deep water but set their nets close inshore, hence the name of the picture."*

#### **4. The Tony Banks Memorial Trust**

- 4.1 The gallery has been awarded a grant from the Tony Banks Memorial Trust to purchase *Study for 'Labourers 1898'* by Sir John Alfred Arnesby Brown RA (1866-1955).
- 4.2 Falmouth is the first gallery in Cornwall and only the second in the country to be recognised by the Trust.
- 4.3 Sir John Arnesby Brown ranked amongst the top British Impressionists of his generation and was highly regarded internationally. This beautiful study of a horse drinking is for one of the artist's major Royal Academy exhibits and was painted during the artist's period in St Ives.
- 4.4 The significance of the work was discovered by Lawrence Hendra of the Lander Gallery, Truro who assisted Falmouth Art Gallery by offering it at a considerably reduced price and reserved the picture to give the gallery a chance to raise the funds.
- 4.5 The purchase will complement the Arnesby Brown painting '*A Summer Day*' already in the Falmouth Art Gallery Collection, which is particularly popular with visitors.
- 4.6 Apart from the historical importance the work has to our collection we felt the painting an appropriate choice for funding from the Memorial Trust because of Lord Stratford's special interest in the welfare of animals.

#### **5. Catching the Light – the Sunshine Paintings of Henry Scott Tuke**

- 5.1 The exhibition was a huge success. Overall, Falmouth Art Gallery and the Royal Cornwall Museum attracted a significant total of 40,247 visitors, out of which Falmouth attracted 20,247. Within Falmouth Art Gallery there were 2,035 educational visits, 1,658 were community education visits and the remaining were school children. For the Royal Cornwall Museum there were 1,050 educational visits, with 1,023 from the community and the rest from schools.
- 5.2 The project was also extremely successful in terms of press coverage and was widely mentioned in local and national publications. The exhibitions reached an estimated readership of over 18.177 million.
- 5.3 People travelled from across the UK and abroad to stay in Falmouth to see the exhibitions.

## **6. Africa calling**

6.1 This was also an extremely popular exhibition attracting 10,188 visitors. There were 1,093 educational visits, 387 from schools and 706 from community groups.

6.2 Chris Spring, Curator of the African galleries at the British Museum travelled to Cornwall to give a talk at the gallery. It was extremely well attended and much enjoyed by our visitors. Artist John Trigg and African expert David Peters also gave a very popular talk during the exhibition.

6.3 The gallery also staged a week of 'Holiday Hulabaloo' for families. Throughout the week visitors young and old enjoyed taking part in badge making, mask making, costume designing and musical instrument making workshops. The highlight of the week was a drumming workshop and performance from 'Penrhythm', a Falmouth based samba band.

## **7. Celebrating Cornwall's Stained Glass Heritage**

7.1 The gallery's 'Celebrating Cornwall's Stained Glass Heritage' project is well under way. Restoration work to remove the tax office windows and replace the dado rails in the foyer has now been completed and has greatly improved the appearance of the foyer. We have already had many complimentary comments from visitors.

7.2 The large Hemy painting '*Got 'em all' – The Bob Newbon Lifeboat* has been conserved and reinstated to its original position. By 1904, at the time of this work, Hemy had established a strong reputation as the country's leading marine artist. The large-scale study was for a design for an engraving that was sold to raise funds for the Royal National Lifeboat Institution. The idea was the suggestion of the Prince of Wales, (later to become George V) and has proved so popular that the image is still raising money for the RNLI today, over 100 years later.

7.3 Staff have organised special outings for MENCAP and the excluded children who created the designs for the stained glass windows. During October and November they will visit Tate St Ives, Truro Cathedral and the Royal Cornwall Museum to see famous examples of Cornish stained glass. They will also travel to Mike Welch's studio in Wadebridge to see the windows being made.

## **8. Hemy plaque**

- 8.1 Churchfield, Falmouth, the former home of artist Charles Napier Hemy RA RWS (1841–1917), now proudly bears a plaque in his honour.
- 8.2 Hemy built Churchfield in 1883 and lived there with his family until his death. Many of his greatest works were painted in his studio at the property or on his floating studio *The Vandermeer*. The house at Kimberley Place is now the Athenaeum Club but few in the town realise its historical significance. With the erection of the plaque it will now be clear to all.
- 8.3 The plaque was organised by staff at Falmouth Art Gallery on behalf of Hemy's granddaughter Margaret Powell. It is made of local granite from De Lank Quarry, Bodmin, an appropriate choice as Hemy's wife Amy was from The Freeman family who ran the important granite business in Penryn. The plaque was traditionally carved by monumental mason Robert Lawrence and bears the inscription '*Charles Napier Hemy RA RWS 1841–1917 Marine artist, Built and lived here 1883-1917*'.

## 9. Gifts

- 9.1 Cornwall's most successful and much loved artist Kurt Jackson has presented an important painting entitled *In the Cove* to the gallery. *In the Cove* is one of his major works and is the second Kurt Jackson in the collection as we already possess *Carnsew: Across the Quarry 6 January 1998*.
- 9.2 Deidre Hubbard has presented the gallery with a bronze sculpture entitled *Earth Egg*. Deidre was born in New York and studied at Harvard University and Chelsea Art School. Her sculptures explore the rhythm of natural forms so *Earth Egg* will fit perfectly into one of the forthcoming Darwin exhibitions funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund.
- 9.3 Ray Atkins has presented the gallery with two works: *Study at Falmouth Docks – Night* and *Summer scrapyard – Car Dump at Carharrack, July 1981*. Ray has lived and painted in Cornwall since 1974 and so the works are an important addition to the collection.
- 9.4 The National Maritime Museum Cornwall has agreed to transfer two works by William Ayerst Ingram into the Falmouth Art Gallery collection. Ingram was one of the original artists in the first Falmouth Art Gallery.

## 10. Work Placements

- 10.1 The gallery has successfully hosted a number of work placements in recent months. Laura Butcher, an MA student from Leicester University, completed an eight week placement over July and August. Vincent Beirne from Mullion School and Abi Tate from Falmouth School both came to the

gallery for two weeks work experience. Rowan Leeming is currently undertaking a thirteen week work placement and Julia Molland has recently started six weeks work experience.

## **11. Tall Ships**

- 11.1 The gallery organised a number of events to coincide with the 'Funchal 500 Tall Ships Regatta'. The Tuke celebrations continued with an exhibition of Tuke's tall ships paintings. The exhibition was staged in partnership with the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society to mark their 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The works were selected by Dr Anthony Phillips and John F. Tonkin of the Poly. *Tall Ships by Henry Scott Tuke* will be on display in the permanent gallery until October.
- 11.2 The book launch of *Tall Stories for Tall Ships* was held at the gallery. The book features the writing of Falmouth schoolchildren, many of whom attended the event with their families.
- 11.3 Years 2, 3, 4 and 5 from King Charles School visited the exhibition as part of their learning activities for the regatta.

## **12. Website**

- 12.1 Falmouth Art Gallery is the first gallery in Cornwall to make its entire collection accessible online. The project has taken over 5 years to complete.
- 12.2 The catalogue will be an important resource for schools, colleges and Universities as well as other galleries, museum professionals and researchers.
- 12.3 The gallery wishes to thank Steve Collinson and Adrian Look of Look Systems for designing and updating the website and catalogue. It also wishes to thank all of the volunteers for their hard work on the project, especially Pat Webster, Linda and Michael Bickford, John and Joan Argyle, Richard Harold, Terry Thorne, John Tonkin, Suzanne Crook, Rowan Leeming and Julia Molland.
- 12.4 The gallery has a few works awaiting copyright clearance and these will complete the project once reproduction negotiations have been finalised.