

## 1. Frameworks Project

1.1 A successful application to the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation has led the gallery to receive an award of £56,820 to undertake a three year Frameworks Project, believed to be the first of its kind in the country.

1.2 This unique and ground-breaking project will, catalogue and conserve all major frames in the collection, providing equal care and scholarly emphasis in the marriage between picture and historic ornamental frame. Over a three year period major works by artists such as George Frederick Watts, John William Waterhouse, Sir Edward Burne-Jones, Sir John Arnesby Brown, John Opie, George Romney, Sir Alfred Munnings, Dame Laura Knight, Henry Scott Tuke, William Strang and Ben Nicholson will have their frames conserved to the highest professional standards.

1.3 The role of the frame in the presentation of a picture fulfils many functions including the enhancement of subject and colour, the focus of the spectator's attention on the subject and most importantly the provision of an area of transition between real world and the picture.

1.4 However, to date no British gallery or museum, in presenting pictures to the public, has given the collection in its entirety equal emphasis as a marriage between frame and picture. The Esmée Fairbairn Foundation in providing the grant has recognized that Falmouth Art Gallery is in a unique position to set the standard, because of its small, but high quality collection.

1.5 The idea for the project came from the landmark book *Frameworks* by Paul Mitchell & Lynn Roberts - the world's leading experts on the most significant frame styles associated with major European artistic movements. The authors have kindly agreed to provide specialist advice to the project.

1.6 The project aims to:

Show that scholarship and family friendly interpretation can be achieved in harmony

Encourage contemporary artists to see, where relevant, the frame as an integral piece of the artwork

Develop professional skills in the heritage sector, including craft skills

Train and involve volunteers

Mount two exhibitions, one during the project and one on completion

Produce a catalogue and web based programme

Run an accessible community education programme, including gallery talks and workshops

1.7 The Frameworks bid took nearly two years to research, cost and prepare because of the specialist nature of the work, so the gallery staff are delighted that the bid has proved successful.

1.8 Due to the success of the above funding application some of our priorities have shifted since the 2008-2009 budget was set. It may occasionally be necessary to make virements between art gallery budgets to help meet with our commitments promised to the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation. These would only be undertaken with the knowledge and approval of the Town Council's Deputy Clerk and Finance Officer; and it is hoped that this proposal would be passed by Falmouth Town Council. The agreed overall budget would remain the same and no additional funding would be required.

## **2. Building Improvements**

2.1 The gallery has widened the access past the shop counter to enable easier access for pushchairs and wheelchairs. This has been managed without losing shop display space.

2.2 The gallery has just taken delivery of two new benches that were designed and crafted by Furniture Studies students George Green and Ed McGough under the supervision of course leader Phil Whitfeld. Gallery staff have been working in partnership with the college to provide higher education students with live design briefs. The ash and beech benches are much needed to provide additional seating for exhibitions and during the gallery's popular lunchtime talks and community workshops.

2.3 A new toy box, clipboard store and parent seat have also recently been added to improve the facilities when toddlers are drawing at the jungle table.

### **3. Fish & Ships Exhibition**

3.1 This exhibition proved extremely popular attracting 7,416 visitors and 919 educational visits. The show included Newlyn School paintings as well as contemporary photographs by Vince Bevan and Mark Webster.

3.2 The gallery held a certificate ceremony for schools to thank them for their excellent work in gallery workshops during the recent *Fish & Ships* exhibition. The children worked on an exercise inspired by the photographs from the *Newlyn; Fishing for a Living Project* by photographer Vince Bevan. They had to imagine what it would be like to be a fisherman and then design and make their own fish species.

3.3 At the ceremony all the children were congratulated and presented with a special certificate by Falmouth's Deputy Mayor, Cllr Gerald Chin-Quee.

### **4. Winifred Freeman Exhibition**

4.1 The gallery held a special exhibition in the permanent gallery, featuring the works of forgotten Falmouth watercolour artist Winifred Freeman. Winnie studied at Herkomer's Art School at Bushey and was a close friend of Henry Scott Tuke RA. She was the sister-in-law of the marine artist Charles Napier Hemy RA. The Freeman family ran the important granite business in Penryn. She raised eyebrows in her day by wearing pantaloons, cycling with her easel, smoking a pipe and travelling the Continent on her own! The gallery borrowed from private collections in England and Wales for the exhibition.

4.2 The exhibition was very well received and attracted 5,700 visitors and 563 educational visits.

4.3 Staff and volunteers have been helping the artist's grand-niece, Margaret Powell, research Winnie's life for a full colour booklet that was published to accompany the exhibition. Margaret liaised with gallery staff and the Town Council Sexton, Lee Mitchell, to arrange to have Winnie's grave restored and marked in celebration of her artistic achievements. Winnie is buried in the Freeman family vault in Falmouth cemetery, but her name was never inscribed on the tombstone. She died in 1961 at the great age of ninety-five, by which time all her immediate family had passed away.

4.4 Margaret visited the restored grave before giving a well-attended talk on her Aunt at the Gallery. Margaret had attended Winnie's funeral in 1961 and is very pleased that Winnie's great talent has now been formally recognized in her home town.

## **5. Smell the Sea - Feel the Breeze Exhibition**

5.1 As an early celebration of Falmouth's hosting of the start of this year's Funchal 500 Tall Ships Regatta, Falmouth Art Gallery is currently showing a major art exhibition capturing the joy of water, wind and waves. "Smell the Sea, Feel the Breeze" has something for everyone - from dramatic sailing adventures in wild waters to paddling in rock pools with Rupert Bear.

5.2 It has been made possible by the generous sponsorship of TMS Financial Solutions, of Truro and Penzance, who are making their debut in arts sponsorship, and Arts and Business South West, who have funded the additional insurance and the transporting of valuable works. These include works by distinguished Cornish artists such as Henry Scott Tuke RA, Charles Napier Hemy RA, William Ayerst Ingram, Frank Jameson, Mike Haywood, Jamie Medlin and David Hills.

5.3 Important loans from the Royal Society of Marine Artists Diploma Collection have been made available through the National Maritime Museum Cornwall and work by Sir Terry Frost, one of Britain's greatest abstract painters, has been made available through a private collection.

5.4 The gallery has held five evening special views for this exhibition, all of which were very well attended. The wine and canapes were funded by TMS Financial Solutions.

## **6. Trevor Bell Workshops**

6.1 A-level art students from Falmouth School spent a day with two of Cornwall's leading artists at Falmouth Art Gallery. The gallery received £450 funding from Little Parc Owles Trust to run the special workshops that were inspired by one of its recent acquisitions, *Five Bar* by Trevor Bell. The students took part in workshops based on the masterpiece under the guidance by Portscatho artist and author, Chris Insoll. The sessions were followed by a fascinating talk from the internationally acclaimed Trevor Bell.

6.2 The workshops were run with assistance from Claire Harrison and Donna Williams. Taking *Five Bar* as their inspiration students created vibrant Trevor Bell style mono-prints and drawings using oil pastels. They then heard Trevor tell the story behind his amazing career and his monumental painting. Trevor seldom gives talks, but made a special exception for Falmouth Art Gallery. This was such a rare opportunity that the gallery had the talk filmed so a copy of could be preserved in its archive, copies have also been presented to the school, funders Little Parc Owles Trust, and University College Falmouth.

6.3 This is the latest in a series of artist-led workshops sponsored by Little Parc Owles Trust that have taken place at the gallery, all of which have proved to be extremely beneficial for the students involved. Staff have observed that the experience of meeting artists has a great impact and often stimulates further project work outside of the gallery for many months after. This workshop proved to be just as successful as the students were really inspired and produced some amazing work. It was felt that the workshops would have been approved of by artist, curator and educationalist Nerys Johnson, whose contemporary art fund made the Trevor Bell *Five Bar* purchase possible.

6.4 An exhibition of the students' work was held in the staircase gallery.

## **7. Media Recognition**

7.1 The Children's Illustration Archive at Falmouth Art Gallery has been featured in the NADFAS Quarterly Review, which has a circulation of 77,886 and a readership of approximately 180,000. The magazine is distributed to societies in France, Spain, Belgium, Holland, Australia, New Zealand. We are grateful to Dr Amanda Hobson for making the article possible.

7.2 The gallery was also recommended in a restaurant guide published by *The Guardian* as a great place to visit in the South West before or after your meal.

7.3 An article in the *Sunday Telegraph* newspaper has listed *The Pear Orchard* by Alfred Parsons, part of the Falmouth Art Gallery collection, as one of 'Britain's 50 Best Paintings – Outside London'.

## **8. Website**

8.1 Work is continuing behind the scenes. Volunteers John and Joan Argyle are busy photographing the collection and the digital images are being imported into the system by Richard Harold. Plans are to have the collection accessible live on the world wide web by the end of the year.

## **9. New community groups**

9.1 The gallery is very pleased to have been visited by two new community groups.

9.2 Higher education students from Falmouth Marine School attended a specialist talk on underwater photography given by gallery volunteer Susanna Webster. The Leisure Management students viewed the gallery's collection of underwater photography by Mark Webster and learned about the practicalities of publishing and marketing.

9.3 The gallery also welcomed a group from St Christopher's, a respite centre in Redruth. The group enjoyed a tour from the curator and took part in a 'Ship Shapes' collage workshop.

## **10. New Aquisitions**

10.1 St Ives artist Clare Wardman has donated her work *Morvah –Sea Figure, Sail Loft Series*. Clare is one of the distinguished artists who have worked from Porthmeor Studios. The work is part of a series of one hundred observational paintings inspired by the multiple views from her studio window.

## **11. Hemy's Crab Merchant**

11.1 Falmouth Art Gallery made a brave attempt to acquire at auction an important painting by Charles Napier Hemy RA (1841-1917) for the Town's collection.

11.2 The gallery had raised significant funding from the Art Fund and MLA/V&A Purchase Grant Fund as well as assistance from The David Messum Gallery, London. However, in the end the bidding on the picture was just too high and the gallery was unsuccessful. Unfortunately the money raised has to be returned to the funders.

11.3 The painting was originally sold by the artist in 1904 and transported to Australia where it has remained until the present day, when it was auctioned by Bonhams.

## **12. Loans**

12.1 *The animals leaving the Ark, Mount Ararat* by Fillippo Palizzi (1818-1899) has returned safely after a loan spell at the National Gallery, London. It is now currently on show in the permanent collection gallery.

12.2 *In the Coulisses* by Dame Laura Knight (1877-1970) has gone on loan to The Lowry for an exhibition on the artist.

## **13. AMA Mentoring**

13.1 The gallery is acting in the capacity of mentor for candidates wishing to become Associates of the Museums Association. One candidate from Plymouth City Museum & Art Gallery has already successfully completed the two year course, while two other candidates (from Torre Abbey and Penlee House Gallery & Museum) are just beginning their courses.