

Zooming into the New Year with
An Introduction to the Box at Plymouth
by Paul Brookes, CEO

The Local History group started the year on Zoom with a talk about The Box, a project part-funded by the Arts Council and the latest addition to the Ocean City scene.

CEO Paul introduced himself by saying he is not a historian, but a film producer, who was recruited to the post at The Box with the aim of building a team.

He then explained that The Box is in fact an integration of several Plymouth-based enterprises – including the Museum and its archive, the Art Gallery, the SW Film archive, the Image Bank, the library and a de-commissioned church, which serves as a superb exhibition space.

The resulting centre is an architecturally stunning base for entertainment, learning and research.

Permanent displays include a Woolly Mammoth; Ships' Figureheads, and Journeys which started from Plymouth, including those of Drake and Darwin.

There is/was a paid exhibition featuring Mayflower 400.

The Archive - comprising around 19,000 boxes - is located in “the Box in the Sky”, offering ample opportunities for research.

The building which also has a shop and cafe was planned to be safe and welcoming and is manned by 90 volunteers, 6 days a week – closed Mondays.

The early months were affected by Covid-19, which led to successive closures, but the Box has already proved a great attraction, exceeding expected visitor numbers, of whom $\frac{3}{4}$ have been local people.

It is clear that Paul has made an excellent job of getting the Box up and running, and it will undoubtedly make a superb day out once we are free to travel again.

To see pictures and find out more about The Box go to the website
www.theboxplymouth.com