



Sail Training International

**ANNUAL REVIEW**

**2024**



# FOREWORD

Another busy and successful year, with a six-port race series in the Baltic and the resumption of many activities that were put on hold during the pandemic.

You can find a brief report on the Races in this review, but I was particularly pleased to get to two of this year's ports, Tallin and Turku, who both did an outstanding job of hosting the ships and the young people.

Extending the series to six ports, with a longer deployment for the Race Team, undoubtedly puts increased pressure on the volunteers and staff involved, and I am very appreciative of the debt we owe all of them.

Once again we learned a lot from the Host Port Seminar, held in Turku this year, and expanded our Anchor Port Scheme, which gives greater certainty to ports and to our own forward planning.

Our primary focus is always on young people, and all of our other activities are an essential means to this end. You can find reports on our various bursary and project funding programmes, underpinned by generous support from The Royal Navy of Oman, Rendez-vous Naval de Quebec, and Marlow Navigation Netherlands.

Also in this review is a report from the Youth Council, an important part of our governance structure who keep us more directly in touch with our most important stakeholders.

Other activities are described in the following pages, but I want to finish by a special thanks to our Trustees and Directors, who give so much time, thought and effort to the oversight of such a complex international organisation.

We have some additions to these numbers, but I want to give my personal thanks to those stepping down this year, Raúl Mimbacas and Paul van Ommen. They both have long seafaring experience and an encyclopaedic knowledge of sail training and ship operation, which has been central to our thinking. We shall miss them.

This is my last year as Chair of Sail Training International. It has been a huge privilege to serve in that role, and to be part of the extraordinary worldwide family of sail trainers over a 35-year involvement.

My heartfelt thanks and good wishes to all of you.



Jonathan Cheshire OBE  
Chairman, Sail Training International



# THE TALL SHIPS RACES 2024



This summer saw us return to the Baltic Sea for the first time in 7 years with The Tall Ships Races 2024.

Across the races, we welcomed 67 ships from 16 different countries around the world to take part in over 870 nautical miles of sailing. Between them, the fleet brought the exciting experience of The Tall Ships Races to over 4,500 trainees and crew from across 36 nations.

On the water the Tall Ships took part in 3 races that saw them tackle a number of varied and challenging sailing conditions.

Once all was said and done, the ultimate prizes went to Lietuva (Lithuania), who came first overall on elapsed time, Fryderyk Chopin (Poland), who finished first overall in Class A, Rupel (Belgium), who finished first overall in Class B, Helena (Finland) who came first overall in Class C, and Tara (Denmark), who topped the table overall in Class D.

The main prize of the series, the coveted Friendship Trophy, was awarded to Fryderyk Chopin (Poland), who took the core theme of international friendship to their hearts throughout the series.

The trophy is awarded to the vessel – on the votes of all Captains – which has contributed the most to promote international friendship and understanding within the fleet throughout the whole of The Tall Ships Races.

**67**

SHIPS

**16**

NATIONS

**119**

PRIZES AWARDED

**870**

MILES SAILED

**4500**

CREW

**36**

COUNTRIES REPRESENTED

**459**

HOST PORT TRAINEES

**58**

DECK EVENTS

**2.8M**

VISITORS



# THE TALL SHIPS RACES 2024



# TURKU JOINS ANCHOR PORT SCHEME

Ahead of the start of The Tall Ships Races 2024 Host Port stop in Turku, we were delighted to confirm that the Finnish city had successfully applied to join the Sail Training International Anchor Port Scheme.

Having first hosted the world-famous race series in 1996, Turku hosted The Tall Ships Races for the sixth time in 2024.

With the agreement to join the Anchor Port Scheme, they are now also confirmed to welcome the majestic Tall Ships fleet when they return to the Baltic Sea in 2028 and 2032, and every four years thereafter.

Joining three other Anchor Ports, Esbjerg, Aalborg and Antwerp, Turku becomes the first port in the Baltic Sea to achieve this status.

## WHAT IS THE ANCHOR PORT SCHEME?

The Sail Training International Anchor Port Scheme is open to ports or cities who have a track record of delivering successful editions of The Tall Ships Races.

The scheme provides ports and cities the certainty of hosting a Tall Ships event at regular intervals.

It also enables Host Ports to be associated with our core values of youth development, international friendship and understanding, and protection of the environment.



# THE TALL SHIPS RACES & REGATTAS HOST PORT SEMINAR TURKU



Alongside the announcement that Turku has joined the Sail Training International Anchor Port Scheme, the Finnish city also hosted the Tall Ships Races and Regattas Host Port Seminar.

The Seminar is one of the important events behind the scenes at The Tall Ships Races every year, and we were pleased to welcome 60 delegates from 22 Host Port organisations to the fourth stop of the series to take part in a series of sessions and workshops.

The programme this year continued our focus on the sharing of collective knowledge, and we would like to extend a special thanks to everyone who attended and took part to make the day such a success.

Once again the seminar proved to be an invaluable experience, highlighting different ways to help Host Ports deliver successful events and continue improving the experience for young people, ships, Host Ports and visitors.

## THE PROGRAMME

1

A Review of The Tall Ships Races 2024 Project by the Turku Organising Team

2

Looking at the Different Reasons to Host a Tall Ships Races Event

3

Promoting The Tall Ships Races to a Greater Number of Young People

4

Understanding Risk Management and What the Risks are to Host Ports

5

Making The Tall Ships Races Experience Better for All Stakeholders





Alongside the rich programme, the Host Port Seminar also offered delegates the unique opportunity to network with the participating fleet as they saw the excitement and spectacle of the Turku event first-hand.

In the evening, the host ports of The Tall Ships Races 2025, hosted a very well attended reception for Captains on board the German Class A vessel Roald Amundsen.

Here Captains and other guests were able to learn more about plans for The Tall Ships Races 2025, meet the project managers and enjoy time on board the beautiful vessel.

We are pleased to confirm that in 2025, the Sail Training International Host Port Seminar will take place in Aberdeen on Monday 21st July, during The Tall Ships Races 2025 Aberdeen stopover and we look forward to welcoming all our host port delegates once again then.





# BURSARIES AND FUNDING

Across the year, we were delighted to be able to deliver a number of bursaries and funds to support the delivery of sail training across the world. With the return of the Oman Bursary Scheme, the Youth Development Fund, the Canada Legacy Fund, and the launch of the Marlow Navigation Netherlands Bursary Fund we were able to provide over £65,000 in funding.

These funds and bursaries have helped provide young people from all backgrounds the chance to take part in a sail training adventure – particularly those who wouldn't otherwise be able to participate in this transformative experience.



## FUNDING IN 2024

33

Bursaries were awarded through the Oman Bursary Fund and Marlow Navigation Netherlands Fund

17

Nations were represented by the young people who took part in The Tall Ships Races 2024 through bursary funding

6

Projects were funded through the Youth Development Fund and the Canada Legacy Fund

119

Young people took part in the various projects funded by the Canada Legacy Fund and the Youth Development Fund

We would like to extend our thanks to the Royal Navy of Oman and to Marlow Navigation Netherlands, whose generosity has made the Marlow Navigation Bursary Fund, Oman Bursary Fund and Youth Development Fund possible.

Their continued support means we are able to bring the transformative experience of sail training to young people around the world.

# PROJECT FUNDING

2024 saw the return of the Canada Legacy Fund and the Youth Development Fund, which supported some inspiring sail training projects around the world.


Both funds are aimed at the development of more effective sail training programmes for young people, helping them build essential life skills and confidence through an adventure at sea.

This year we were delighted to deliver nearly £35,000 to support these amazing programmes, continuing our commitment to supporting sail training across the globe.


If you know of, or are part of, an organisation delivering sail training projects that would benefit from these funds, we warmly welcome all applications and encourage you to get in touch!




## YOUTH DEVELOPMENT FUND


 The Cidran Sailing Trust were awarded £10,000 for their Voyages to Recovery Project, which supports young people living with psychosis and struggle to engage with conventional therapies.


 The Disabled Sailors Association were awarded £5,000 for their Sail Training Scheme which supported young, disabled sailors, to achieve Royal Yacht Association qualifications.

 World Ocean School were awarded £10,000 for their Tall Ship Immersive: Community Learning programme, a week long sail training voyage for 10 - 14 year olds.

## CANADA LEGACY FUND

 ISPA Japan were awarded \$10,000 for their ISPA Young Mariners Programme, which supported young people to develop leadership, co-operative and self-sufficiency skills on a 7-day voyage.

 Nova Scotia Sea School received \$10,000 for their Youth Leadership Programme, which delivered 8 ocean based adventures in partnership with Immigrant Services of Nova Scotia.

 Bytown Brigantine received \$15,000 for their Resilient Youth: Sailing into Leadership project, which aims to develop technical and leadership skills for 20 marginalised young people.

# BURSARY FUNDING

## MARLOW NAVIGATION NETHERLANDS BURSARY FUND

We are always grateful for the kind and generous support of different organisations around the world who recognise the transformative impact of sail training.

This year, we were delighted to be able to partner with Marlow Navigation Netherlands to offer the Marlow Navigation Netherlands Bursary Fund.

The £5000 fund offered young people aged between 15 and 25 years old the opportunity to take part in a voyage during The Tall Ships Races.

Thanks to the fund, 9 young people from 7 different countries were able to experience the magic of The Tall Ships Races.



## OMAN BURSARY SCHEME RETURNS FOR 2024

The Oman Bursary Scheme returned for 2024 thanks to the kind support of the Royal Navy of Oman.

Now in its 14th year, the scheme has helped hundreds of young people since it was launched and we were delighted to support 24 applicants to take part in this summer's series.

The scheme is aimed at disadvantaged people aged between 15-25 years old – regardless of sailing experience, physical ability or nationality.

It offers the chance for those who may not normally be able to embark on a sail training voyage, or take part in a Tall Ships event, to do so.



# SAIL TRAINING RESEARCH

The last year has seen some exciting developments in the world of sail training research with our research library continuing to grow and the launch of the Sail Training International Research Fund, a £10,000 fund aimed at furthering knowledge of the positive effects of sail training.

Alongside the ongoing work into producing and sharing research, our Research Working Group continues to explore the potential to collect a common data set across the fleet. The aims of this are to assist in a global analysis of sail training in the future as well as ways to build the resources available to support future research projects into sail training for the benefit of all Sail Training International members.

"Solid research sets the sails for progress – empowering every wave of change in sail training and youth development."

"With the ongoing work of the Research Working Group and launch of the Research Fund, we hope to help grow the body of valid research available to our members that can then be used to develop, promote and support our programs."

Sail Training International Trustee  
Murray Henstock

## SAIL TRAINING RESEARCH FUND LAUNCHED

In August, we were pleased to announce the relaunch of the Sail Training International Research Fund. The grant of up to £10,000 has been created to support the body of research available to aid development and awareness of sail training programs around the world.

This is an exciting time in the research world of sail training, and we are happy to do our part supporting our members and operators.

You can find out more about the Research Fund, find inspiration from existing research studies and apply for funding over on our website.



# SAIL TRAINING INTERNATIONAL YOUTH COUNCIL

The Youth Council have continued their important work in 2024 as they continue to promote sail training around the world.

With representatives from over 20 countries, they delivered a number of projects and initiatives, designed to further sail training around the world, that have reached a truly international audience.

Of particular note, the Youth Council were able to provide some amazing experiences at sea through their expanded International Voyage project and newly launched Project Seafairer.

Between them, the projects saw 23 young people from 12 nations taking part in sail training experiences across Europe and the Atlantic Coast of North America.

With the development of young people the central focus of everything we do, we are continually thankful for the crucial role the Youth Council play within the sail training community.

We'd like to thank Blue Flag, Lunenburg Yacht Club, Tall Ships Canada, Lunenburg Marine Museum Society, the Danish Sail Training Association, Water-Link and Sail Training Association Germany for their support delivering these projects.



**Sail Training International**  
**Youth Council**

## WHAT ARE THE AIMS OF THE YOUTH COUNCIL?

1

Ensure the voices and views of young people are represented through our activities

2

Foster and promote cross-cultural and border friendships

3

Promote sail training as a way of educating young people about climate awareness

4

Support the retention and development of returning sail trainees/volunteers

5

Improve our outreach to underrepresented youth around the world

# YOUTH COUNCIL PROJECTS

## PROJECT SEAFAIRER WELCOMES INDIGENOUS YOUTH ABOARD



Back in July, the Youth Council launched its inaugural SeaFair Project. A sail training programme for Indigenous youth, it was delivered in collaboration with organisations including Workforce Warriors and the Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Center.

Hosted by the Bluenose II crew, five Indigenous youth took part in a day-long sailing experience in Lunenburg, Canada. The voyage offered participants, typically underrepresented in the Tall Ships community, the chance to learn core skills such as navigation, knot-tying, and helming.

Following the voyage, a traditional smudging ceremony and a reflective debrief was held at the Lunenburg Yacht Club. Here participants had the chance to reflect on their experiences and discuss the ongoing opportunities for reconciliation between indigenous groups and the wider sailing communities.

## INTERNATIONAL VOYAGE RETURNS IN 2024

After two successful voyages in 2022 and 2023, the International Voyage Project returned in October, sailing between Antwerp, Belgium, and Breskens, the Netherlands.

This year's voyage brought together 18 participants from 11 countries aboard two Belgian vessels, Rupel and Saeftinghe, with the aim of using the ships as platforms to foster cross-border friendships between the international participants.

Working alongside Blue Flag and Young Reporter Environmental groups, this year the voyage also offered participants the chance to engage in environmental initiatives whilst at sea.

Despite encountering some challenging weather conditions, the journey fostered a spirit of exploration and camaraderie, whilst also providing a rich environment to develop key skills and enhance environmental awareness.



# NEW CREWMATES

The wide ranging services and activities that we deliver globally is only possible due to the efforts and expertise of our staff team.

This year we were delighted to see the team grow, with Rebecca Nelson joining as Commercial Assistant, and as well as expand their roles within the organisation, with Vanessa Mori becoming Deputy Chief Executive Officer.



## VANESSA MORI BECOMES DEPUTY CEO

Vanessa joined Sail Training International as Commercial Director in 2018, and we were excited to announce her appointment as Deputy Chief Executive Officer in May.

During her time with Sail Training International, Vanessa has already been responsible for engaging with cities to secure host ports for our Events, and has worked closely with all our stakeholders to help deliver our Tall Ships Races events as well as our annual conferences and Host Port Seminars.

She has continued to push for greater communication between ports, the fleet and Sail Training International in order to meet their respective needs and is committed to ensuring that The Tall Ships Races remain relevant and beneficial to all those involved.

As Deputy Chief Executive Officer, she continues in her role as Commercial Director and additionally will have exposure to all other aspects of the Sail Training International organisation.



## BECKY NELSON JOINS OFFICE TEAM

Back in June we were delighted to welcome Becky to the office team as Commercial Assistant.

Becky developed a passion for sailing after she participated in The Tall Ships Races as a trainee onboard the Wylde Swan in 2013.

She returned to the ship as a volunteer, eventually becoming a full-time crew member during the following years as a deckhand/interior manager.

Graduating from the University of Glasgow with a Modern Foreign Languages degree, she has travelled and taught English in different countries before joining Sail Training International as our Commercial Assistant this summer.

With first-hand experience seeing the difference a sail training voyage can make; Becky is passionate about our core values and is committed to ensuring that young people can benefit from taking part in sail training and The Tall Ships Races.

# NEW CREWMATES

Alongside our full time staff, our volunteer Board of Trustees and Directors play a crucial role in our activities to ensure they continue to meet our charitable aims and objectives.

With this in mind, we are delighted to announce the following updates to our Board of Trustees and Directors this year.



## LUCY GRODIE JOINS BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Alongside our full time staff, the volunteer Board of Trustees plays a crucial role in our activities to ensure they continue to meet our charitable aims and objectives.

They also appoint the boards of Directors of our Subsidiary Companies as well as various committees and working groups for specific projects.

Lucy joins our Board of Trustees having previously served as General Manager of our UK NSTO, the Association of Sail Training Organisations. During her time there, she was able to support over 30 member organisations across a range of areas, including helping them navigate the Covid pandemic.

As a long-time member of the sail training community, both at sea and on land, Lucy provides valuable experience to the Board as they continue to support our various stakeholders.



## PHIL COTTON JOINS BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Joining Lucy on our Board of Trustees is Phil Cotton, who has supported our work as a member of our Finance Committee since 2022.

A former partner at KPMG LLP (UK), Phil has over 30 years' experience in public practice, as well as the higher education, sport and voluntary sectors.

Alongside supporting our work, Phil has been an active member of the volunteer community, chairing Southampton Solent University's Governing Board (2017-2024) and World Sailing's Independent Audit Committee (2017-2024).

Away from his career and volunteer work, Phil is a skilled sailor at a competitive amateur level, keen cyclist and skier.

Having already provided invaluable support to Sail Training International, we are delighted to welcome him to the Board.



## VERNON HARTEN-ASH JOINS TSRIL BOARD

One of the most important ways we are able to support the growth of sail training is through our events, The Tall Ships Races and Regattas.

These events are managed through our subsidiary company, Tall Ships Races International Ltd (TSRIL), which is supported by its volunteer Board of Directors.

Vernon has gained a wealth of experience in his career that will benefit the activities of TSRIL. Having initially qualified as a doctor, serving in the Royal Navy and NHS, he has also gone on to enjoy a successful career in the pharmaceutical industry.

With his experience, knowledge and expertise, we were delighted to be able to welcome Vernon to the Board.



# COMING UP ON THE HORIZON: THE TALL SHIPS RACES 2025



The Tall Ships Races 2025 will take the fleet through the English Channel and North Sea to Le Havre, Dunkirk, Aberdeen, Kristiansand and Esbjerg.

With Host Ports from four countries – France, UK, Norway and Denmark – The Tall Ships Races 2025 will provide the perfect opportunity to take part in some great sailing and embark on the adventure of a lifetime across the North Sea area.

With over 40 ships from 11 different nations around the world already confirmed, next year's edition of The Tall Ships Races is once again shaping up to be an amazing spectacle.

“With each Host Port enjoying a rich history of delivering marquee international events, and sharing our commitment to youth development. We are sure the series will offer another excellent opportunity for young people from around the world to experience the adventure of a lifetime.”

Tall Ships Races International Commercial Director  
Vanessa Mori

Looking beyond our exciting calendar of events, plans are already underway for The Tall Ships Races 2027, which will see the races return to the Iberian Peninsula.

With a number of cities having submitted bids to host the event, we look forward to announcing the course in the coming months.



Le Havre  
4 - 7 July



Dunkirk  
10 - 13 July



Aberdeen  
19 - 22 July



Kristiansand  
30 July -  
2 August



Esbjerg  
6 - 9 August

# COMING UP ON THE HORIZON: THE TALL SHIPS RACES 2026



Looking further on the horizon, plans are well underway for The Tall Ships Races 2026.

The series will begin on Wednesday 24 June and continue through to Sunday 2 August, offering three exciting and challenging race legs and a scenic Cruise-in-Company.

With each Host Port having held several magnificent events in the past, there is sure to be a stunning reception for the fleet at every stop.

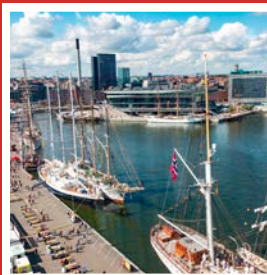
As with every edition of the world-famous race series, The Tall Ships Races 2026 will offer the perfect opportunity to experience the adventure of a lifetime as it brings together young people from around the world to embark on a voyage of challenge and self-discovery.

“Between them, the ports of Aarhus, Harlingen, Antwerp, Stavanger and Aalborg have hosted over 20 editions of The Tall Ships Races. With this rich legacy, we are confident they will all once again welcome the Tall Ships fleet with a spirit of adventure, and a commitment to our core values of youth development, and international friendship and understanding.”

**Tall Ships Races International Chief Executive Officer  
Alan James**

The bidding process for The Tall Ships Races 2028, which is currently scheduled to visit the Baltic Sea, will be opening soon.

Please get in touch if you are interested in applying to host The Tall Ships Races in 2028, or beyond, by contacting Vanessa Mori at: [Vanessa.Mori@sailtraininginternational.org](mailto:Vanessa.Mori@sailtraininginternational.org)



**Aarhus**  
24 - 27 June



**Harlingen**  
3 - 6 July



**Antwerp**  
11 - 14 July



**Stavanger**  
22 - 25 July



**Aalborg**  
30 July -  
2 August



**“IT IS A WHOLE  
DIFFERENT WORLD  
ON THE OCEAN...  
YOU LEARN  
THINGS THAT YOU  
WOULD HAVE  
NEVER KNOWN IF  
NOT FOR THE  
VOYAGE...”**

**- KIYO (15)**



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