

Case Study: National Stories

On their own – Britain's child migrants

Australian National Maritime Museum



Emotional Journeys

The Australian National Maritime Museum recently won the 2011 IMAGinE Award for Exhibitions & Public Engagement for their travelling exhibition *On their own – Britain's child migrants*.

The museum partnered with National Museums Liverpool UK to tell the emotional story of British child migration. The exhibition explores the government endorsed schemes and the motivations behind them.

Child migration schemes existed from the 1860s through to 1967, when British children were sent to Australia, Canada and other Commonwealth countries. Through detailed case studies, visitors to the exhibition meet a number of former child migrants and find out more about their different experiences through photographs, letters, and poignant mementoes from their childhood.

The museum worked closely with former child migrants to tell their many stories. A supporting website – www.britainschildmigrants.com – was also developed in conjunction with the exhibition for others to share their memories and experiences of child migration. The website features a discussion board where former child migrants from all over the world and their families have been sharing their stories, their memories and photographs and even reconnecting with each other after so many years.

The website has been extremely popular and enabled the museum to connect with communities and individuals well beyond the physical reach of the exhibition.

On their own – Britain's child migrants opened in Sydney at the Australian National Maritime Museum, toured at the Migration Museum in South Australia and will open at the Immigration Museum in Victoria on 12 October. The exhibition will also be on show at the Western Australian Maritime Museum before touring to the UK.

Image above: Former child migrant Stewart Lee who was at the exhibition opening