



Sailing Through Royal History Exhibition: The Royal Yacht Britannia back in Cowes for Bicentenary

For the first time in nearly 30 years, The Royal Yacht Britannia returns to Cowes on the Isle of Wight through 'Sailing Through Royal History', an exhibition from The Royal Yacht Britannia Trust celebrating its enduring connection with Cowes, its community and the close Royal links to legendary local yacht designer Uffa Fox.

This brand-new touring exhibition will be hosted in the historic Commodores House, once the workshop of renowned yacht designer and builder Uffa Fox, Commodores House also hosted members of the Royal Family, including Prince Philip who was a former crewmate and personal friend of Uffa. The exhibition will run throughout August (31 July–29 August) and coincides with major sailing events including Cowes Week Bicentenary Regatta and the two prestigious Dragon class regattas, The Edinburgh Cup and the Marblehead Trophy.

Central to the experience will be COWESLIP, the most celebrated of the Flying Fifteen keelboats, once sailed by the Royal Family. Designed and built in Cowes by Uffa Fox, COWESLIP was presented to Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip in 1947 as a wedding gift from the local community. Recently restored by Cowes-based David Heritage Racing Yachts, COWESLIP will be displayed once again on the quayside of Commodores House, underscoring its deep historical ties to Cowes and how Uffa had her craned on.

Through images, video, and both virtual and augmented reality, the exhibition explores Uffa Fox's major contribution to yacht design and build, the story of Royal sailing, and the longstanding presence of The Royal Yacht BRITANNIA at Cowes Week, bringing to life this remarkable chapter of maritime history.

In the evenings, the characterful surroundings of Commodores House transform into an ideal setting for relaxed drinks receptions and informal dining through exclusive use hire. With its waterfront location and rich maritime heritage, it is the perfect place to unwind after a day on the water or to soak up Cowes at its most vibrant. This unique events space will be available for private hire throughout the month of August.

In addition to this exhibition, The Royal Yacht Britannia Trust, in partnership with the Classic Boat Centre Trust, has commissioned an exclusive series of informative panels located by the waterside on The Parade in Cowes. The panels highlight the bicentenary of 'Racing Royals' featuring the personalities of Edward VII, George V and Prince Philip and their contribution to the maritime heritage of Cowes through their presence and support to the event.

Chief Executive of The Royal Yacht Britannia Trust, Franck Bruyère: *"With the touring exhibition being a first for the Trust, we are proud to debut 'Sailing Through Royal History' in Cowes, one of the UK's most significant sailing destinations. Working with local businesses and the people of Cowes, we are delighted to contribute to such a prestigious and historic event in this momentous bicentenary year of Cowes Week."*

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For more information on The Royal Yacht Britannia, go to www.royalyachtbritannia.co.uk

Notes for editors:

- Sailing Through Royal History exhibition tickets £12 adult. Tickets available now. [Coves | Exhibition in Cowes 2026 | Official The Royal Yacht Britannia](#)
- The Royal Yacht Britannia was home to Queen Elizabeth II and the Royal Family for over 40 years, sailing over a million nautical miles around the world. Now a visitor attraction and evening events venue, the Royal Yacht has been voted Tripadvisor's No. 1 Attraction in the UK three times, and has been permanently berthed in Leith, the waterfront area of Edinburgh.
- The Royal Yacht Britannia is cared for by The Royal Yacht Britannia Trust who also care for three of the former Royal Sailing Yachts; COWESLIP, BLUEBOTTLE and BLOODHOUND, with BLOODHOUND owned by the Trust. The Royal Yacht also owns the luxury floating hotel, Fingal, Tripadvisor's No. 1 'One of a Kind' hotel in the UK, No. 4 in the world. A former Northern Lighthouse Board vessel, Fingal's 23 cabins, Ballroom and the 2 AA Rosette Lighthouse Restaurant & Bar are inspired by its rich seafaring history.
- Commodore House is situated directly on the waterfront in Cowes and with views across the Solent, was once lived in by Uffa Fox and is a unique venue combining fascinating history with outstanding harbour views. It was purchased by Uffa Fox in 1948, who converted the warehouse into a combined home, office and boatyard. Draughtsmen used to work in the drawing office upstairs, and wooden boats were built in the boathouse. Prince Philip's Flying Fifteen COWESLIP was kept on the quay and was hoisted by crane into the water for racing in the Solent. Uffa Fox sold the house to the Terry family after his death, the drawing office was then closed as the Terrys moved in. The current owner is John Terry, and the building is used for weddings and events.