

NEW RELEASE: 03 February 2006

EMPIRE MUSEUM LAUNCHES YEAR OF EVENTS WITH ANNUAL PASS

The award-winning British Empire & Commonwealth Museum has announced an exciting programme of events for 2006 and visitors to the first event of the year, 'Pirates & Princesses', are being offered an annual pass at no extra charge.

The 2006 holiday events are: 'Pirates and Princesses' (11th – 19th February); 'A Victorian Fairground' (1st – 17th April); 'Summer Holiday Club' (26th July – 3rd September); 'Magical Mayhem' (21st – 30th October) and 'A Victorian Christmas' (20th December – 3rd January).

By purchasing a £16 family ticket this February visitors can save over £60 on the cost of future holiday events alone, as well as enjoying unlimited return visits to the Museum, its permanent galleries and the current Native American exhibition, 'Pow Wow'.

Anne Lineen, the Museum's Exhibitions Manager, says: "Busy parents regularly say they wish they could spend longer in the Museum or come back another day, but often struggle to do so. This fantastic offer will allow the people of Bristol greater access to both great holiday entertainment and a rich and important educational experience."

This February half term, the Museum presents 'Pirates & Princesses', the finale to a series of events celebrating Bristol's fascinating history of Piracy. Topping the bill is an action-packed show 'Captain's Calamity' performed by the acclaimed company 'Madhouse Productions' who guarantee song, dance and audience participation. With a bouncy castle, face-painting and even a Pirate & Princesses Academy there'll be seafaring silliness and nautical naughtiness from 11th through to the 19th February.

There'll be another opportunity to travel back in time this Easter as the Museum re-creates an enchanting 'Victorian Fairground' with games, rides, music and stalls from a bygone age. During the October half term 'Magical Mayhem' will explore the myths and mysteries of illusion and trickery from around the world. Then, later in the year a traditional Victorian Christmas is in store with family games by the fireplace in an authentic 19th century drawing room.

Following recent refurbishments, the Museum is set to re-open its doors on 1st February 2006 and will be open everyday from 10.00am to 17.00pm including Bank Holidays. Further information on forthcoming events can be found at www.empiremuseum.co.uk.

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Notes for editors

- **The British Empire and Commonwealth Museum** is the only Museum in the world to present the 500 year history of the British empire and to examine the legacy of Britain's colonial history on modern, multicultural Britain. The Museum opened in September 2002 and was short-listed in 2004 for the title of 'European Museum of the Year'. Its current special exhibition 'Pow Wow', about England's Tudor attempts to colonise America, was nominated for the 2005 Museums and Heritage Awards for Excellence.
- **'Pirates and Princesses'** is a free event included with normal Museum admission and is suitable for adults and children aged three years upwards. 'Captain's Calamity' shows will be performed Monday 13th to Friday 17th February at 11am, 1pm & 3pm, with a show time of approximately 30 minutes. All other events and activities take place at regular intervals throughout the day, every day. Visitors are advised to check with the Museum for details of each day's programme.
- **Free re-entry** for 12 months is not available in association with any other discount or promotion.

- **Voucher Promotions opportunity:** Discount vouchers (for café) and competition prizes for 'Pirates & Princesses' week are available for use by Press contacts on request.

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