Press Release

23 November 2026

New exhibition "Hidden Histories Beneath the Waves" at MANA

Last Friday night, partners and other collaborators of the National Archaeological Museum Aruba (MANA) were the first ones to experience the fascinating new exhibit "Hidden Histories Beneath the Waves", the result of more than 25 years of research, dedication, and collaboration, and ongoing work on Aruba's Underwater Cultural Heritage.

MANA was honored by the presence of Mr. Leon Derksen, maritime archaeology advisor at the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands (RCE), who opened the new exhibition on Aruba's underwater archaeology and was the first visitor to share on the "Your Story Matters Wall" in the exhibition.

During the night, MANA, as well as RCE, together with the wife and daughter of the late Mr. Gino Wauben, honored his memory with great appreciation. Mr. Wauben, who became a passionate advocate for protecting underwater archaeological sites, made a generous donation of his collection of artifacts from the SS Pedernales to the Museum. His lasting contribution can now be appreciated in the exhibition "Hidden Histories Beneath the Waves".

This exhibition was made possible with the support of important partners, including RCE and INKFISH LLC. RCE's generous financial support has been instrumental in bringing this exhibition to life and making it possible to share Aruba's underwater cultural heritage with the public. Since 2021, RCE has worked with MANA to strengthen the management and protection of maritime and underwater cultural heritage in Aruba and the Dutch Caribbean, including regional knowledge exchange.

RCE's Maritime Heritage Management training for heritage professionals from all six islands, held in Aruba in 2025, was a particularly valuable milestone. With RCE's continued support, MANA could advance its ongoing underwater cultural heritage research in San Nicolas Bay, in cooperation with IDNOVA, the Aruba Conservation Foundation, and Aruba Bob Snorkel and Scuba.

The collaboration with INKFISH likewise opened new opportunities for underwater archaeological research. INKFISH contributed directly to this exhibition through digital 3D models, prints, and video footage from its recent expedition. Many other partners, researchers and institutions shared their knowledge, time and resources. MANA thanks Restaurant Marina Pirata for making their “Spanish Olive Jar” available for this exhibition.

This exhibition is truly the result of a collective effort, and it reflects what can be achieved through collaboration.

We invite local and international visitors to explore this fascinating new exhibition at MANA, from Monday to Friday, 9 am to 5 pm. Periodically, we will introduce new features to make the exhibition "Hidden Histories Beneath the Waves" even more captivating for our repeat visitors. So, make sure to revisit!