

Savannah, Georgia is a city that works hard to preserve its unique history; inspired by the story of The Waving Girl, The Beacon embraces and celebrates the city’s strong roots while bringing people together to imagine a more inclusive, shared future.

The large lighthouse at the eastern end of historic River Street may, at first, seem to be too far inland. But this is no ordinary lighthouse. A trip highlight for travelers, The Beacon innovatively serves as “the guestbook of Savannah,” inviting visitors share their stories to learn from and connect with each other. Accessible to all, this landmark serves as an appreciated access point to River Street for those with physical disabilities.

Locals find opportunities for community here, hosting events, selling goods, and catching up with neighbors while their dogs and kids enjoy playgrounds and open space.

By day, guests admire the incredible view from the observation deck while they wave at ships passing by. By night, the glowing lanterns provide a warm welcome to “The Hostess City of the South.”

Hospitality can be felt through the generous reception of all, so that wherever life takes someone who comes through our doors, this space and this city will be here awaiting your return. We’ll keep the lantern burning.

How would you like your project to be judged?

Creative and Technical

Mostly Technical



Mostly Creative

Team Member	Major/Minor/Concentration	Role/ Contribution to project
Participant #1	Motion Media Design	Team Leader, Research, Written Material, Typography
Participant #2	Animation	Concept Art, 3D Modeling, Page Composition
Participant #3	Animation	3D Modeling, Concept Art, Written Material
Participant #4	Animation	Illustration, Final Renders

Story behind the design

Waving a handkerchief by day and a lantern by night, Florence Martus welcomed every single ship that entered her hometown of Savannah, GA from 1887 to 1931. For over 40 years, sailors from all over the world could look forward to this greeting by the woman they came to know affectionately as The Waving Girl. She embodied the warmth and hospitality that makes Savannah “The Hostess City of the South”. Legend has it that sailors wrote letters to Florence from wherever their adventures took them; through their stories, Florence was able to explore the world and learn about different cultures.

The Beacon is inspired by her legacy, creating a space for enlightening experiences. For guests, this is a welcome home away from home. For locals, a fresh perspective on a city and story they thought they knew.

User/ Guest Experience

Adults wonder at the activity seen through transparent walls in the lighthouse on historic River Street. Kids race ahead, spotting a pirate ship playground - who will reach the captain’s wheel first?

The lighthouse’s doors slide open, revealing a spacious room with a wrap-around screen high on the wall and interactive stations below. An animated Florence invites visitors to write her a digital letter, telling stories from their hometowns and marking it on the large map above. Others peruse past guests’ letters, learning firsthand stories about faraway cultures.

A lantern-shaped glass elevator brings passengers to subsequent floors, where they can learn about the city and pick out the perfect souvenir from local vendors. Future dreams for Savannah are displayed, keeping locals up to date with their town and inspiring visitors to plan their next trip.

Finally, the waving deck! Children eagerly check the ships’ schedule, excited to wave at new arrivals. Secretly, the parents are eager to see them too, and they’re thankful for the coffee available at The Beacon Bite Cafe.

At Marty’s Bark Park, local dogs and owners are enjoying the evening. Visitors exit through the lantern bridge, waiting for the warm glow to welcome them again.

The Beacon

Explore. Enjoy. Inspire.

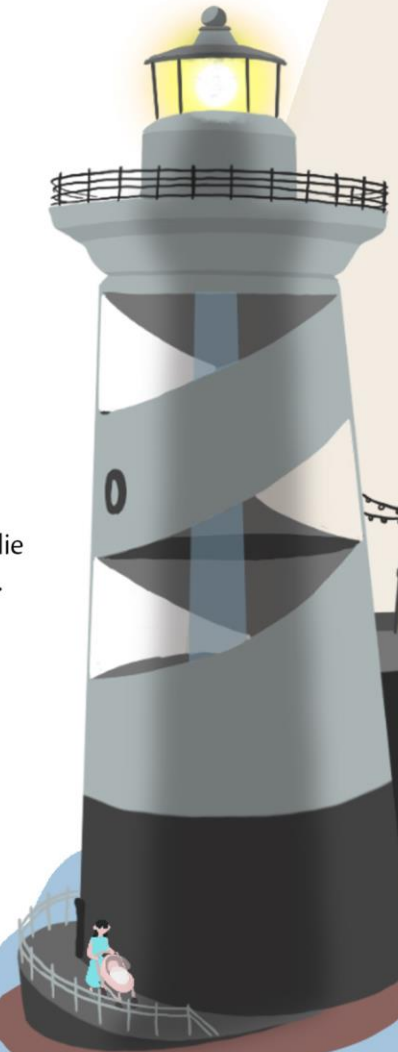


Meet Florence ▲

Waving a handkerchief by day and a lantern by night, Florence Martus welcomed every single ship that entered her hometown of Savannah, Georgia from 1887 to 1931. For over 40 years, sailors from all over the world could look forward to this greeting by the woman they came to know affectionately as The Waving Girl.

▼ Meet Marty

A loyal companion, this border collie joins Florence in all her adventures.



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LIGHTHOUSE LAYOUT

Beacon Bite Café & Waving Deck

Wrap-around views are excellent for waving at ships passing by.

Florence's Event Center

This space can be rented out for private banquets and ceremonies.

The Next Adventure

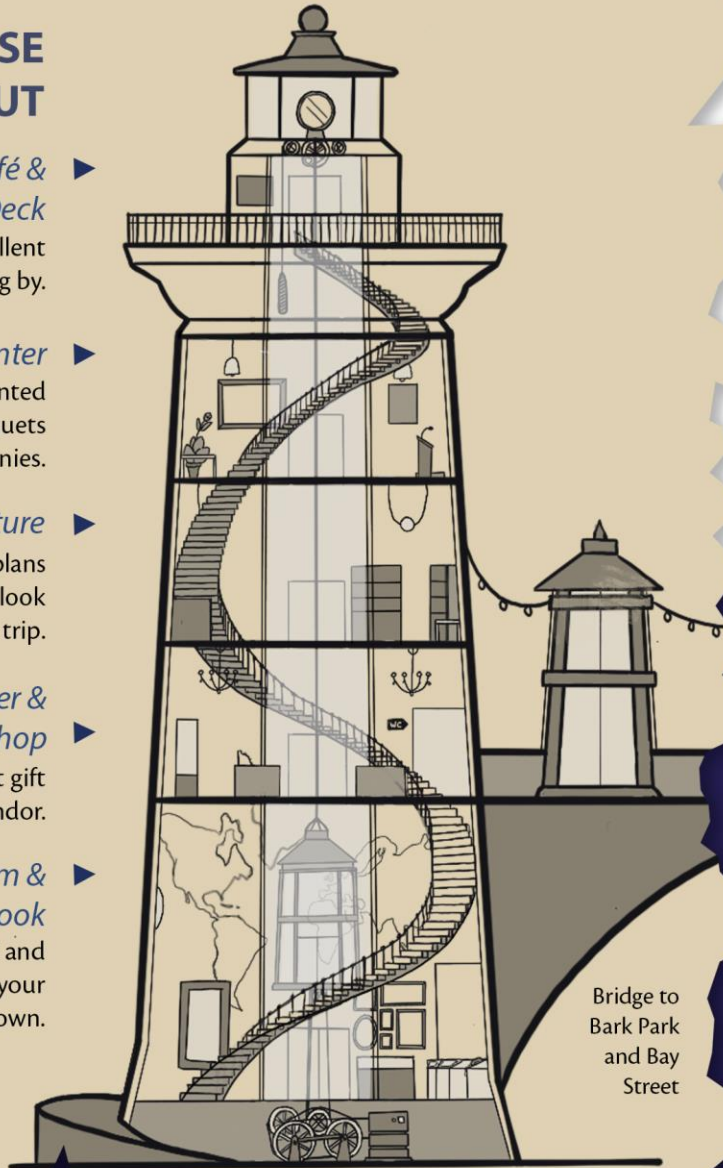
Locals engage in the plans for the city, and visitors look forward to their next trip.

Visitor Center & Treasure Shop

Find the perfect gift from a local vendor.

Museum & Interactive Guestbook

Explore Florence's world and write her a letter about your hometown.



Bridge to
Bark Park
and Bay
Street

An Elevated Experience

River Street is currently accessible primarily by historic narrow stairs that are not accommodating to many visitors. The Beacon serves as an access point for all, including guests with physical disabilities, so that everyone can experience the historic riverfront shops and attractions.



▲
Illuminated at night, this lantern shaped elevator offers incredible views of the Savannah River and historic River Street.

Marty's Bark Park

Florence and her family bred border collies, and this dog park serves as the upper level entrance to The Beacon. Located on Bay Street, the park is equipped with a state of the art obstacle course.



▲ Gear Up

Marty bandanas are available for purchase inside, for any critter in your home. All profits go towards support for local humane shelters.

Lantern Bridge

Florence's glowing lanterns provide a warm welcome to "The Hostess City of the South". Lounge benches are available to view River Street below, as visitors venture towards The Beacon, where they will be able to explore five floors of amusement and education.



Museum & Interactive Guestbook

An animated Florence invites visitors to write her a digital letter, telling stories from their hometowns and marking it on the large map above. Others peruse past guests' letters, learning firsthand stories about faraway cities and cultures.

Greetings and salutations!

Welcome to my home of Savannah, Georgia. The name's Florence Martus, and I've never missed a ship that has passed through these waters. I adore listening to the stories of travelers from all areas of the world. Tell me where home is for you and I'll mark it on my great big adventure map!

What's your favorite thing about home?

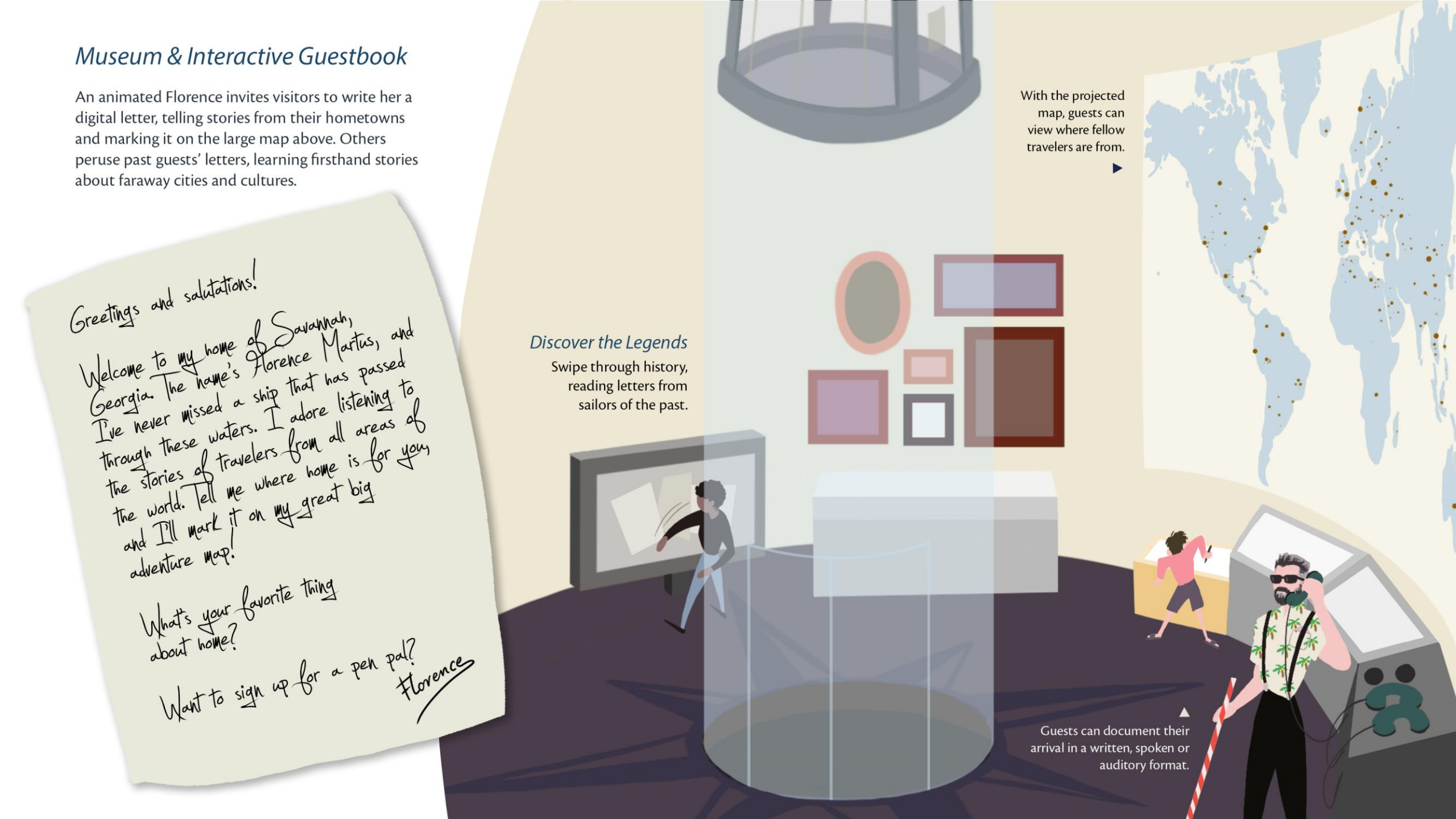
Want to sign up for a pen pal?
Florence

Discover the Legends

Swipe through history, reading letters from sailors of the past.

With the projected map, guests can view where fellow travelers are from.

Guests can document their arrival in a written, spoken or auditory format.



Waving Deck

At the waving deck, guests can view the schedule of upcoming ships, while admiring an elevated 360 degree view of the Savannah skyline.

Children eagerly check the ships' schedule, excited to wave at new arrivals. Secretly, the parents are eager to see them too.

▼ *Beacon Bite Café*

Come drop by the Beacon Bite for a quick snack and beverage. For first time guests, it's on the house! Try the Hostess House Roast coffee, or Marty's favorite, the Paw-Print Pecan Pie.



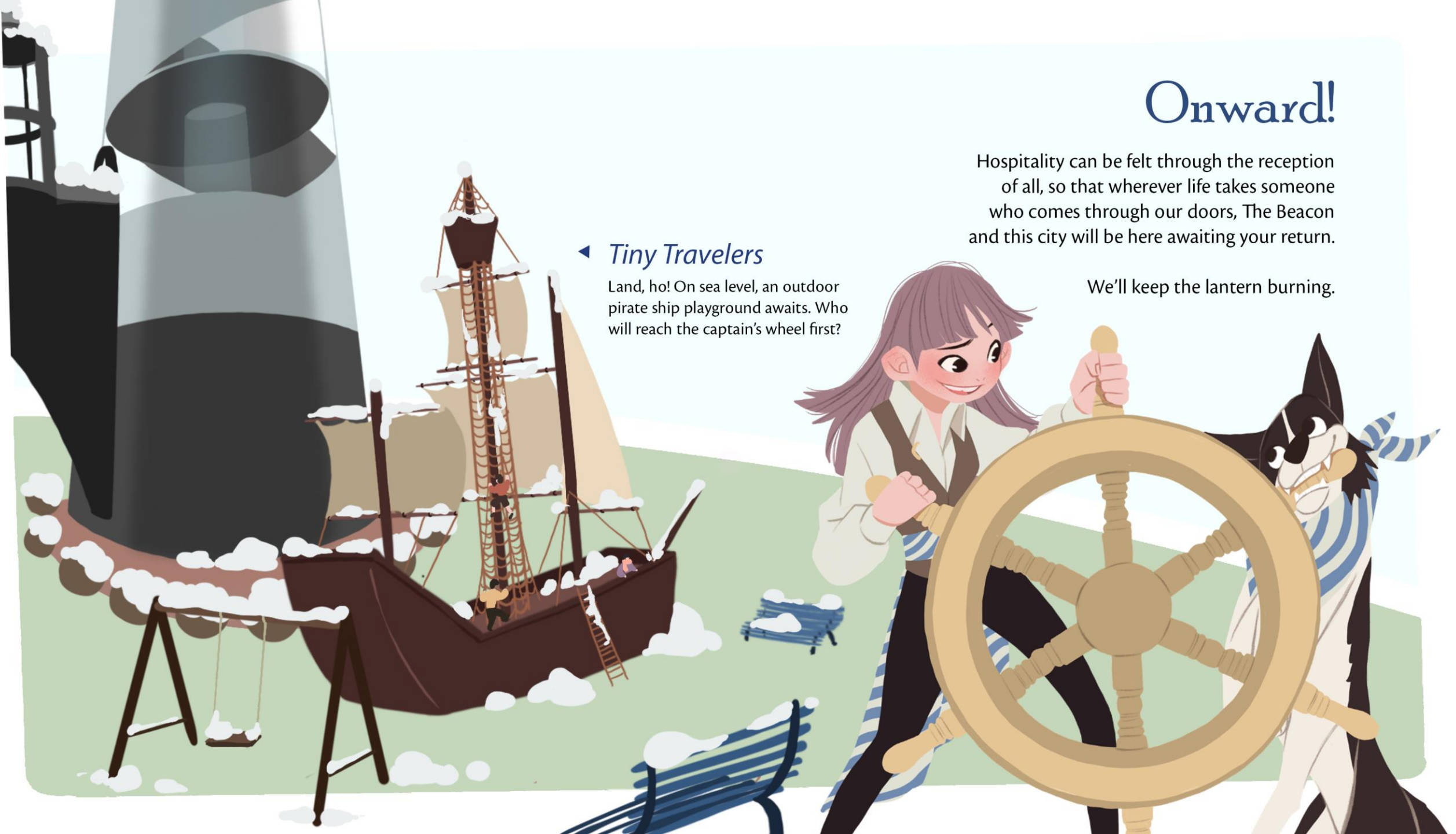
Onward!

Hospitality can be felt through the reception of all, so that wherever life takes someone who comes through our doors, The Beacon and this city will be here awaiting your return.

We'll keep the lantern burning.

◀ *Tiny Travelers*

Land, ho! On sea level, an outdoor pirate ship playground awaits. Who will reach the captain's wheel first?



You will be judged both individually and as a team

What were your specific contributions to this project? How is your academic field of study or expertise represented in your portion of this project?

In my role as team leader, I coordinated the project schedule and application process, making sure we met all deadlines and fulfilled the project requirements. I also scheduled group meetings and served as a liaison for team communication. This role aligns with my interest in eventually working as a producer or project manager at a motion design studio.

My career aspirations, and the impetus behind my study of motion media design, is to create digital, interactive, and experiential media that educates and inspires people. I am particularly interested in teaching history through art and aspire to create media for museums and educational institutions.

These interests are represented in my project roles as researcher and storyteller/writer. I researched the history and legends surrounding “the Waving Girl” Florence Martus. Organizing and consolidating this information allowed me to identify the heart of the story and pertinent details. I collaborated with my teammates to distill this history into a concise story and conduit for further learning and exploration. We then composed the written elements of the project to be both clear and engaging for the reader. Making history relatable and accessible through interactive and experiential media is both my career goal and one of the aims of our project.

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What were your specific contributions to this project? How is your academic field of study or expertise represented in your portion of this project?

I contributed to this project with 3D modeling and concept art, as well as organized the page composition and renders for the final presentation. Animation has helped increase my attention to detail, and has given me the foundations for 3D modeling. Through drawing and storyboarding classes, I have gained practice in telling ideas through sequential images. I also wanted to assure that this structure was accessible, and modeling according to all forms of foot traffic was important to me. I also conceptualized the spiral portion to the lighthouse, to add more personality to the structure.

With a background in graphic design, I wanted to make sure the final render was as clear and as easy to interpret as possible. In the future, I aspire to teach animation at a professional level. Holding others accountable is my strength, and I enjoy seeing the potential in people.

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What were your specific contributions to this project? How is your academic field of study or expertise represented in your portion of this project?

Through studying marketing, graphic design and animation, I was able to contribute towards writing, concept art, branding and 3D modeling. The modeling helped provide a base for our illustrator to work from, as well as provided a general idea of scale and concept. Construction was done in Maya and rendered in Arnold, with lighting for both day and night scenes. Lighting from inside the lanterns allowed us to make sure this was a highlighted feature. The size of the lanterns needed to be congruent with the width of two wheelchairs, so that all can enter this establishment. In designing the model, I added consistency by mimicking the structure of the top of the lighthouse in the lanterns below. I wanted the model to have historical accuracy, using references from Florence's original lighthouse.

Being in animation has strengthened my ability to bring story to a brand. I created names to make this exhibition truly feel like a package, such as Marty's Bark Park and The Beacon aligned with my marketing background. Having the ability to make this site interactive, such as purchasing Marty's bandana, or gaining a pen pal integrated the audience with the story.

My expertise lies in giving new experiences appeal with relatability. I enjoy creating connections between people, and finding depth in a concept, not only with the story behind the exhibition itself, but also with each other.

You will be judged both individually and as a team

What were your specific contributions to this project? How is your academic field of study or expertise represented in your portion of this project?

Studying animation, with a focus in concept art, I assisted in this project by developing the characters, Marty and Florence, and drawing the final renders of the presentation. As a character designer, I am interested in diversity, and as I pursue animation my focus is on the untold story. I like to include action in my illustrations to give a presentation vibrancy and relatability.

I chose to keep Florence's character young so that a broader audience could relate. This style was friendly, welcoming and active, which was true to the attitude of our installation. Keeping her memorable, I gave her light purple hair. Keeping her authentic, I gave her a chipped tooth, which is true to all of my character illustrations. My extra character's poses in the render are also dynamic, telling a strong story.