
PRESS RELEASE

For immediate use: May 2018

'Fact and Fabrication' Project to mark First World War Centenary supported by National Lottery

Spiral Arts has just received a National Lottery grant of £10,000 for their project 'Fact and Fabrication', which will give glimpses of the home front experience down the Derwent Valley during the First World War. Awarded through the Heritage Lottery Fund's First World War 'Then and Now' programme, the project will encourage those who are interested in discovering the past to explore people's experiences who lived and worked in the area. Findings will then be used to develop a touring exhibition consisting of information panels and a creative textile piece echoing the Valley's heritage.

Marking the Centenary of the end of the First World War, the project will enable local people in Derbyshire to come together to preserve the memories and heritage of the people who lived through WWI. Participants will visit Derby Local Studies Library, Derbyshire Records Office, the Historic Mills of the Derwent Valley as well as undertaking research training sessions with the University of Derby. By collecting information from photographs, newspaper clippings, documents, letters, artefacts and family tales passed down through the generations, the findings will be interpreted to fabricate a textiles centrepiece for an exhibition that will be shown in various venues in and around the Derwent area to share the rich heritage of the Valley during WWI.

Spiral Arts is a community-based arts organisation who will be managing the project. Its Creative Director, Jenny Anthony, commenting on the award, said: "We are thrilled to have received the support of the National Lottery and we are looking forward to uncovering stories from the local area about the past."

Hazel Thomson, who has assisted with writing the bid and getting the project off the ground, added: "We hope to discover some of the hidden histories of these past times and to turn the findings into an exhibition that can be shared with others."

The 'Fact and Fabrication' project will explore many facets of life on the Home Front. These will include exploring the changes to the mills which, as the heart of the industrial revolution, altered production to supply army uniforms and ceramics for munitions. Other



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areas of research will include changes to agriculture due to rationing, the changing roles of women as a workforce and 'Work for Women' as well as industrial relations.

As well as the exhibition that will be on display along the Derwent Valley later this year, there will also be a booklet containing the research findings. Ultimately, the finished project will become part of the British Library First World War archive. People will be able to track the story of the research and the unfolding snapshot of life in the Derwent Valley during WWI on our blog factfabrication.wordpress.com

Research has already begun on the project, with participants attending research training sessions at Derby Local Studies Library and Derbyshire Records Office in Matlock as well as a behind the scenes tour of Masson Mill. It is expected that work on the exhibition content will take place during July and August, ready to tour the Derwent Valley for the Centenary later on in the year.

Jonathan Platt, Head of HLF East Midlands, said: "The impact of the First World War was far reaching, touching and shaping every corner of the UK and beyond. The Heritage Lottery Fund has already invested more than £94million to more than 1,900 projects – large and small - that are marking this global Centenary. With our small grants programme, we are enabling even more communities like those involved in 'Fact and Fabrication' to explore the continuing legacy of this conflict and help local young people in particular to broaden their understanding of how it has shaped our modern world."

Could you help?

Do you have any artifacts that could help with the 'Fact and Fabrication' project research? Would you be willing to share it with us? If you have any stories, photographs, letters, articles or artifacts you would be willing to share with the project then please get in touch. Email: spiral_arts@hotmail.co.uk

Mobile: 0776 587 0266

Any help would be gratefully received!

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Note to Editor

Spiral Arts are a Derby-based collective of professional visual artists with over 12 years' experience of delivering participatory workshops. Their aim is to work in the local communities in Derby and the surrounding areas and use visual arts as a vehicle for



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social interaction in shared creative spaces, working with hard to reach groups, making workshops accessible to all, discovering creativity and developing skills.

They would like to excite communities and encourage them to creatively come together and celebrate their achievements.

They have been working together since November 2005, and have collaborated on many schools, youth groups, mental health and community projects using a variety of themes. They have extensive experience in delivering high quality workshops and their passion is to create textile-based artwork, large-scale structures and well dressings.

They have delivered projects for the city councils and many other organisations and each project is grant-funded. They have a studio base in Grove Lodge, Derby Arboretum Park

Contact Details:

Jenny Anthony

0776 587 0266

spiral_arts@hotmail.co.uk

<http://www.spiral-art.blogspot.co.uk/>

Hazel Thomson has been involved in various projects since taking early retirement two years ago. She has helped to design, plan and get the 'Fact and Fabrication project' underway. Her foundation in community and youth work underlies her approach to the project in assisting people to develop new skills and to discover what they are capable of doing.

About the Heritage Lottery Fund

Thanks to National Lottery players, we invest money to help people across the UK explore, enjoy and protect the heritage they care about - from the archaeology under our feet to the historic parks and buildings we love, from precious memories and collections to rare wildlife. www.hlf.org.uk. Follow us on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) and use #NationalLottery and #HLFsupported.



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