



PILGRIM TRAILS

February 2019

Welcome to our newsletter - Pilgrim Trails.

This is our fourth publication charting the progress towards the completion of the 'Pilgrim Roots' Project.

MAYFLOWER 400 - New ART Project

Four hundred years ago a group of ordinary **Bassetlaw** people, many of them under 30, made an **extraordinary journey**. What happened when they reached their destination marked the beginnings of modern America. Curators **Kate Stoddart** and **Jo Wheeler** are developing a proposal for a new major arts commission in Bassetlaw to represent and share this story.

Supported by **Arts Council England**, they are planning to work with a national or **international artist(s)** and a group of local young people to bring an arts experience to Bassetlaw that reflects both the local and the international elements of this history. There will be **major events** to mark the **Mayflower's anniversary** across England, The Netherlands and America in **2020** and this project will share **Bassetlaw's important role** in the story and help put the **Pilgrim Roots** area on the Mayflower map.

The project will explore the **timeless themes** of the Mayflower story: a journey into the unknown, the pursuit of tolerance and freedom, making links across the centuries to connect with journeys made by so many people today. They are ambitious too - seeking to bring something **exciting and memorable** to Bassetlaw, that captures imaginations and inspires people to stop and think and talk. What the artwork will be or what it will look like is still open; it could be a **film**, a **structure**, an **event**, a **performance** or a **digital work**. Whatever it is, it's really important that it **connects with the people and places** of Bassetlaw and that's why the project wants to work with a local group to help select the right artist.

Over the winter, **Jo** and **Kate** have been contacting local youth groups, offering **creative workshops** using photography, projection and sound recording to gather **young people's thoughts**, ideas and imagery around the idea of journeys. In December Jo worked with **Misterton** and **Retford Youth Clubs** with future sessions planned with Inspire Learning. The imagery and audio recordings created will be shared with the **artists that are shortlisted** for the commission.

Kate has been researching artists who would work with young people to bring **something extraordinary** to **Bassetlaw**; the kind of artists whose work connects with communities and brings people together for a shared experience, sometimes coming up with something that is not traditionally seen as an artwork or activity. The duo, Lone Twin for example, built a seaworthy sailing boat, **Collective Spirit**, from objects made of wood, donated by local communities on the south coast.

See more of this project at : <http://theboatproject.com>. In Nottingham they worked with residents of a street to create several small dance performances which connected to stories of the neighbourhood, <http://lonetwin.com/streetdance>



Misterton Youth Club with Projection of the Mayflower Ship's Interior.

The project's next step is to work with **youth partners** to set up the young curators group. This will offer opportunities for young people to gain valuable project experience and go on a **creative journey** to explore the **Mayflower themes**, discover some great art and bring the new work to Bassetlaw. The group will help **select three artists** who will be invited to **develop and share their ideas** for Mayflower 400 in Bassetlaw in Spring 2019, before making a final choice about which proposal is put forward to become part of the **2020 commemorations**.

For further information please email Jo at info@jowheeler.co.uk



Plymouth Plantation, Massachusetts



The Nottingham Roosevelt Memorial Travelling Scholarship

Funded by Nottinghamshire County Council, this unique **Scholarship** offers a chance to visit the USA for between 6 weeks and 3 months to investigate a work related topic of your choice. If you're **aged** between **21** and **35** and living or working in the **City** or **County** of **Nottingham**, then you're eligible to apply. No formal qualifications are necessary, and this amazing career and personal development opportunity provides you with **£1,500** or up to **£3,000**, plus a return flight to **New York** with which to make your visit.

This year **NCC** is delighted to confirm that in **recognition** of the **400th Anniversary** of the Mayflower Pilgrims sailing to and arriving in America, Nottinghamshire County Council is funding a **special project** which would be offered to a **Roosevelt applicant** to pursue in addition to their own project. The project will entail **researching** the **historic links** and **life stories** / impacts of some of the **descendants** who left Nottinghamshire and landed in **New England** on the Mayflower

This could be a **wonderful opportunity** for applicants with an interest in the partnership that exists between Nottinghamshire, as members of Mayflower 400 and **our international partners** Plymouth 400 and Provincetown 400, although the **Scholarship** is not limited to topics related to Pilgrims or the 400th Anniversary.

The **closing date** for 2019 applications is **Friday 1 March 2019** and **full details** of how to apply can be found by visiting - www.rooseveltscholarship.org



Plymouth Plantation, Massachusetts

On site - the gallery takes shape



Pilgrim's Gallery Soon to Become a Reality

Work has begun on transforming a redundant council building into a **fabulous new Gallery** at **Bassetlaw Museum** in Retford, **celebrating the life** of one of the **District's most famous sons**.

The **Pilgrims Gallery** is part of a **£750,000** Heritage Lottery funded **project** which commemorates the **400th anniversary** of the **Mayflower's voyage** to America in **1620**. When completed, the Gallery will feature a **recreation of William Brewster's study**, where visitors can learn more about the academic life of Brewster who lived at **Scrooby Manor** and worshipped at St Wilfrid's Church. The **Study part of the gallery** includes a combination of **high-tech digital elements** including augmented reality film and more **hands-on activities** for children such as block printing and writing with a quill and ink, echoing Brewster's history of running a **printing press in Leiden**.

The gallery will also include **interpretation** highlighting the themes of **Religious Tolerance, Freedom and Migration**; challenges which are as **relevant in today's world** as they were when the **Separatists** fought for the right to practice their **beliefs** in the early 17th century. **Bassetlaw District Council's** Deputy Leader Councillor **Jo White** said "We have worked really closely with the Gallery Designers to ensure that visitors of whatever age find the **experience fun, entertaining and thought-provoking**. Assigning children the character of one of the Mayflower's passengers for example, will bring home to them the reality that half of the people who travelled on the ship died during that **first winter in America**".

Doncaster based QCS are the company who were awarded the construction contract for the Pilgrims Gallery and specialist museum fit out experts Workhaus are installing the internal fixtures and fittings to an original design by Michael Oakenfull of Querceus Design. The Gallery is expected to be complete in late May 2019.

The **Heritage Lottery Fund** project 'Pilgrim Roots' also includes the **upgrading** of the existing **Mayflower Trail** with new interpretation at **Babworth, Scrooby and Sturton-le-Steeple** in Nottinghamshire and **Austerfield and Gainsborough** in neighbouring counties; a **new website** which will inform visitors of an exciting events calendar associated with the **Mayflower 400 anniversary in 2020** and the appointment of two additional members of staff, dedicated to improving the visitor experience and helping to tell the **story of North Nottinghamshire's Mayflower pilgrims** to the rest of the world.



Visual reference for the study



Illuminate Events Across the Pilgrim Roots Region

2018 was the third year that **Illuminate** events were held across **North Notts, South Yorks and West Lindsey**. The name '**Illuminate**' was born from William Bradford's famous quote "**as one small candle may light a thousand, so the light here kindled hath shone unto many...**" There were **lantern parades**, church services and receptions in a number of locations including **Retford, Scrooby, Bawtry and Austerfield and Gainsborough**, with a number of **complementary events** including art exhibitions, **Pilgrim fun runs** and even operatic performances. **Plans for Illuminate 2019** in even more locations are taking place and will be **announced very soon**.



Illuminate 2018



The Story of The Pilgrim 400 Apple

Horticulturalist and ex BBC Nottingham gardening advisor John Stirland, tells the story of how the unique Pilgrim 400 Apple came to 'fruiting' no pun intended!

"During the summer of 2015 I was thinking of a way to celebrate, in a horticultural type of way, this anniversary of the Mayflower voyage, which I knew would be something special and I also had five years to get it all sorted. A few ideas came to mind but it had to be something that originated in Nottinghamshire, the home county of the religious separatist's movement.

In October of that same year I happened to talk to Celia Steven at the Bramley Festival in Southwell and she told me that down in Devon they were looking for an apple which could be named Mayflower. This chat was the catalyst for my search here in Nottinghamshire and from then on, our new horticultural representative for the 2020 celebrations had to be an apple, Mayflower from Devon and Pilgrim from our county.

Fortunately, being gardening advisor on Radio Nottingham gave me the opportunity to broadcast a request for anyone to come forward who thought that they may have an apple in their garden that had been raised from a pip. Before the end of our gardening phone-in, a lady rang to say there was an apple tree in her garden that had, indeed, been planted from a pip sown by the previous owners of their house.

It was an astonishing coincidence that this new seedling was growing in a garden in Southwell the home town of our most famous cooking apple "The Bramley." Also, that Celia Steven who had given me the story of the Devon Mayflower apple is a descendant of the Merryweather family of Southwell, who first introduced the Bramley to the world.



My first visit to see the new tree was really exciting but tinged with a little scepticism that as a seedling the fruits themselves would not amount to much; how wrong I was. As I walked around the corner of the house, I could not believe that in front of me stood a beautifully shaped tree dripping with lovely pinky red, wellshaped fruits of good size and backed by a further crop of healthy green leaves. I just knew that I had found my new tree and at the first attempt.

After a cup of tea with the owners and their approval for me to use the tree, I took a few of the fruits to show to interested people. I had a feeling that the apple would at least be a good keeper due to its firm skin and those first samples lasted until May of the following year.

Nothing in horticulture is fast moving and during the winter I had time to decide on how to take the whole project forward. Spring arrived and I had to be ready to get a dozen or so trees grafted onto proper apple rootstocks. For this I got in touch with Pete Wilkinson owner of Old England Nurseries at Sutton on Trent who at the appropriate time carried out the grafting and also grew the trees on for the first year. The following autumn Pete presented me with twelve splendid pot grown whips (one-year old trees) which now needed a new home. These are destined to be the very first trees to be planted around North Nottinghamshire during the 2020 celebrations.

In 2017 samples were sent to the Horticultural Research Institute in Kent for them to carry out a DNA test of our new tree just to make sure that Pilgrim 400 was indeed a new variety.

I was pretty sure, from its history and my initial examination of the original Southwell Pilgrim 400 that it was genuinely from a pip but better to be certain. During late summer Celia sent me the results of the test and one little box on a very colourful sheet told me that our tree was unmatched which verified that the apple I had found during the autumn of 2015 was, indeed, a brand-new variety of apple from Nottinghamshire.

PS - All of the Pilgrim 400 trees are now in my own garden receiving TLC to be ready for planting out during the 2020 celebrations.

Contact

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