

PRESS RELEASE

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Our Histories Revealed - Africans in Hull and East Yorkshire

The stories and social histories of Black people with African heritage will be shared in *Our Histories Revealed*, a fascinating exhibition at Hull History Centre next month, as part of the *African Stories in Hull and East Yorkshire* project.

The project, which received funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund in May 2016, aims to create a record of the local stories, oral histories, art and music that have been collected from people across Hull and the East Riding, from extraordinary family histories to anecdotes remembered over the dining table. It examines the presence and contribution of people of African descent from 1750 to 2007, the bicentenary of the abolition of the slave trade, in the region.

Project lead Gifty Burrows said: "This has been a wonderful project so far. The opportunity to hear these often forgotten or unheard stories has been fascinating. From the incredible to the everyday, it shows the breadth of experiences that people have had in the area.

It's also been encouraging to hear that taking part in the project has opened up discussions within families with people unearthing new information and sharing knowledge about things that happened in the past."

The exhibition will feature images and art works, but will also offer people the opportunity to listen to some of the family stories that people have recorded for the project, listen to music, watch video footage and see artefacts and memorabilia in a multisensory representation of these forgotten histories.

The project continues into 2018, with the team welcoming further contributions from people in the region. Gifty said: "We're still looking for more people to share their stories and experiences with us and would encourage people to get in touch. We want to create as thorough a record of the experience of people of African descent in this area as possible and the more contributions we have, the better that will be."

People are also encouraged to bring photographs along to the exhibition or upload them to the project website (www.africansinyorkshireproject.com) to help build up a bigger picture of the history of Black people of African descent in the region.

Gifty continued: "Whether it's a photograph of a work colleague or a class picture from your school days, we'd encourage you to bring it along to help us enrich the project. We don't necessarily need lots of information about the people in the pictures, just a rough date and location could be enough."

Those who would like to contribute to the project should visit the website or contact the team by email on wilberforcemonumentfund@gmail.com.

The free exhibition will open on Tuesday 26 September and be on display until Saturday 21 October and is supported by Hull City Council.

Full details about the project can be found at www.africansinyorkshireproject.com.

ENDS

For press information, please contact: Matt Walton at Hull 2017,
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NOTES TO EDITORS

Gifty Burrows and a participant from the project are available for interviews.

About Hull UK City of Culture

Hull UK City of Culture 2017 is a 365 day programme of cultural events and creativity inspired by the city and told to the world. Hull secured the title of UK City of Culture 2017 in November 2013. It is only the second city to hold the title and the first in England.

Divided into four seasons, starting with **Made in Hull**, this nationally significant event draws on the distinctive spirit of the city and the artists, writers, directors, musicians, revolutionaries and thinkers that have made such a significant contribution to the development of art and ideas.

Hull 2017's second season, **Roots and Routes**, runs from April to June and explore Hull's unique place as a gateway to Europe and one of the world's busiest ports. Its maritime history and global connections inspire the stories of the city; this season of work will also celebrate Hull's international links, including Rotterdam, Reykjavik and Freetown.

Freedom runs from July to September. Building on the legacy of Hull-born anti-slavery campaigner William Wilberforce MP, *Freedom* will explore the concept of freedom in all its many forms. The final season, **Tell the World** will run from October to December.

The Culture Company was set up to deliver the Hull 2017 programme and is an independent organisation with charitable status. It has raised £32 million, with over 70 partners supporting the project, including public bodies, trusts and foundations and local and national businesses.

Key contributions are coming from: **Host City** - Hull City Council; **Principal Partners** - Arts Council England, BBC, Big Lottery Fund, East Riding of Yorkshire Council, Heritage Lottery Fund, KCOM, KWL, Spirit of 2012, Yorkshire Water and the University of Hull; **Major Partners** - Associated British Ports, Arco, BP, the British Council, British Film Institute, Green Port Hull, Hull Clinical Commissioning Group, MKM Building Supplies, P&O Ferries, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Sewell Group, Siemens, Smith & Nephew and Wykeland Group. The National Lottery has contributed more than £10m of this funding, making it the largest single funding body for Hull 2017.

68 per cent of the funding is dedicated to public facing activities, including the widest range of cultural events in every corner of the city, with a further 11 per cent for legacy and contingency. More than £5 million is being invested in volunteering, learning and community engagement. £1.6 million is being invested to ensure a legacy after 2017. This includes capacity building, such as supporting existing events so they can grow, staging curtain-raiser events, developing future programming for after 2017 and building a new platform to support a unified ticketing system for the city.

Hull 2017's International Partners are: Aarhus, Denmark, which is European Capital of Culture 2017; Reykjavik, Iceland; Rotterdam, The Netherlands; and Freetown, Sierra Leone (twinned with Hull). These relationships are reflected in a number of events throughout the year.

For information go to www.hull2017.co.uk

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