



June 2011

Messages from Devon **Celebrating social diversity and supporting community cohesion**

Past to present

Devon County Record Office has today launched *Messages from Devon* a unique project using archives, printmaking and sewing to engage the diverse communities in Devon, and is enlisting the public to help capture their history of the county.

The project which is supporting the forthcoming 2011 national Archive Awareness Campaign theme *Culture and Diversity: What's Your Story* will produce flags from hundreds of artwork to illustrate the history of the county and the community's views and perceptions of Devon.

Artist Catherine Cartwright said:

"We've been working with local community groups encouraging them to tell us how they came to be in Devon and what Devon means to them. We've also collected stories from people from all over the UK and around the world, as well as those whose families have been in the Devon for many generations.

The recollections have been inspiring and thought provoking. People have told us about their favourite landmarks and places to visit. Others have shared sad tales from their past. The common thread is that they have all chosen to make their home in Devon and take pleasure in living here. They have enjoyed depicting the things that make Devon special to them through this wonderful artwork".

Devon Record Office is inviting the public to contribute their stories of Devon to help build the patchwork which will become an archive for future generations. Following a tour of the Exeter Respect Festival and Exeter Fringe Festival, the results will be on display at the Record Office from July until September 2011.

Community engagement

- Groups engaged in the project include Newton St Cyres Youth Group which works with girls aged between 12-16 years old.
- Rejuvenation Exeter-a community group for international adults based at St Sidwell's Centre in Exeter, supporting those with physical and/or mental health difficulties.
- The Refugee Support Group-a group of female refugees from Afghanistan.
- Workers Educational Association (WEA) Southwest-a charity that supports adult learning. The WEA Learners were undertaking an 'introduction to drawing and painting' module as part of the project.

Where to find out more

Devon residents who would like their story to form part of the project archive should email their story to exhibition@doubleelephant.org.uk. The messages will be accessioned along with the exhibition and kept in the archive at the Devon Record Office, and will be available for access throughout the year.

Applicants can submit words, sentences as well as stories. Submissions should be no more than 500 words long and pseudonyms are welcome.

Further information

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