



Rothwell Heritage with
Desborough & Rothwell Art Gallery

Artist Brief:

Their Past Your Future: “Evacuation in Rothwell” Loan Resource.

1. About Rothwell Heritage with Desborough and Rothwell Art Gallery

Situated in north Northamptonshire, Rothwell is an historic market town with a strong community atmosphere and a wealth of history and artistic talent to celebrate. The centre relies on dedicated volunteers, who answer queries, steward the galleries, care for museum objects and make the centre the success it is. A project manager has been engaged to oversee *Evacuation in Rothwell*.

2. Project Context

Over 3.5 million children were evacuated in Britain during the Second World War. Rothwell's role was both typical and abnormal, so its history is important. The town received the usual coach loads of bewildered city children but also took in hundreds of 'other persons' – mostly pregnant women and young mothers. The community was a little shocked, but soon found the extra beds needed.

We were granted an award by the 'Museums Libraries and Archives Council as part of the nationwide Their Past, Your Future programme. Our project is called *Evacuation in Rothwell*, and this brief concerns finding an artist to contribute to Phase 3.

- Phase 1: Collect contemporary accounts and reminiscences of the experiences of World War II evacuees and those they lived amongst in the Rothwell area. Then devise and perform an original piece of theatre based upon the research. Completed August 2008
- Phase 2: Create portable interpretive display panels for community and school use. To be completed Summer 2009.
- Phase 3: Create a portable drama and history educational and community loans resource. To be completed Autumn 2009; then trialed: available for use Winter 2009.

We hope to bring the issue up to date by prompting audiences to make connections between the evacuee experience and the experiences of new communities coming to the area (growth agenda community/asylum/refugees/immigrants).

3. Output

The successful artist will design and create a drama & history resource vessel.

The loans resource will be used to introduce the subject of evacuation to some users and remind other's of their early life. It will build a picture of the life of evacuees and the communities that took them in. The resource will place the real history of

evacuees in Rothwell in context and encourage different audiences to investigate and learn.

The vessel will form part of the story being told through the loans resource. It will contain an evacuee handling collection, suitable replica and period items, an activity pack and certain props created for the play. The vessel's contents will be provided.

The successful artist will be challenged to consider evacuation in the local area and so develop a resource with a unique sense of place. The resource created should challenge the expectations of those using it beyond the usual evacuee suitcase loan box.

4. Audience.

The audiences for this resource will include:

- Schools – particularly KS2
- Community and social groups - W.I, church groups, Scouts...
- Care homes - reminiscence activities
- Family use at the centre

5. Indicative Contents

- Modern & period objects: marbles, yo-yo, enamel mug, comic, shrapnel piece
- Replica items: gas mask, ration book, identity card, evacuee suitcase, replicas of rationed amounts of sweets and bread, gas mask box, coins
- Props and costumes created or purchased for the play: stockings, overalls, headscarf, beret...
- Activity Pack: Sheets will be provided to prompt entertaining use and effective engaged learning: a) schools worksheets, b) reminiscence prompts for older audiences c) general activity sheets

We would also like to include audio. We have oral history recordings and sounds/music from the era that will add to the experience of using the resource. If there were an appropriate way to deliver sound through the vessel itself or something contained within it, it would be of great interest. Alternatively, we could simply include a CD or data stick, but that isn't very inspiring is it?

6. Theme and Key Elements

The overall design theme should suit the resource's objects, activities and purpose. It must safely contain the items for storage and transportation, whilst also enhancing the users' experience of the resource. It should excite interest and contribute to the sense of investigation. Guidance on conservation issues will be provided.

- The vessel and the chosen method of packaging the objects will provide context to the whole loans resource.
- The vessel should help create a sense of place – we are looking to tell the story of evacuees and the community, people and places that received them.
- The whole vessel will help tell the story of evacuation in Rothwell, not just the objects housed within it.

7. Limitations

- The vessel must be lighter than 15k.
- It must be small enough to fit into the boot of a car.

- It must be made of materials that do not harm the objects or users.
- It must be secure and robust enough to withstand travel and use.
- The activity pack should be housed securely.
- The objects must be appropriately packaged/wrapped/secured/housed to ensure their protection during storage and transportation. A variety of methods may be used to suit the different items. These methods should add to the vessel's ability to help tell the story of evacuation where possible.

8. Funding and Budget

This project has been funded by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, in association with the Big Lottery Fund.

The entire budget for this phase of the project is £3,800. This includes the artist's fee for designing and making the vessel and the cost of materials.

9. Application Process

Please complete the accompanying 'Expression of Interest Form'.

We understand this may be first time you have considered creating a loans resource vessel. The Form will ask you to provide an outline of your ideas and examples of previous work.

For an informal discussion about this project please contact either Joy-Elizabeth Surgey at rothwellgallery@hotmail.com or on 07830221698, or Catherine Earnshaw at 23rdspiral@googlemail.com

10. Time Frame

Date	Action
July 3rd	Artist Brief released
July 19th	Submit Expression of Interest Form
July 20th	Short listed artists notified. £100 bursary given to provide for creating a mock-up
August 3rd	Interviews to meet short listed artists and presentation of idea with mock-up
August 4th	Successful artist notified
August 10th	focus group meeting with artist
October 1st	Vessel to be delivered

The last date for receipt of Expressions of Interest is July 19th.