

Falkirk Voices Celebrated Through Digital Storytelling

An event showcasing Falkirk voices has been held as part of 'The People's Story Project' in Falkirk District. The digital storytelling project, coordinated by Scottish Book Trust and run by Sabine Hellmann, supported by Falkirk Community Trust's library services, worked with local groups to tell their personal stories, whilst developing important digital skills.

Sabine has inspired residents across the Falkirk area to create digital stories and discover technology in a fun and meaningful way. She has delivered digital storytelling sessions to a wide range of groups, including visually impaired participants, volunteers, mental health support groups and local heritage organisations. To date, The People's Story Project has delivered more than 47 workshops to over 70 participants.

Around 60 people from various community groups attended the Digital Storytelling celebration event, which was held on Thursday, 20th of June at Falkirk Town Hall. Storytellers from FDAMH creative women's group, Forth Valley Recovery Community, TCV – The Conservation Volunteers, Callendar House Storytelling group, Forth Valley Sensory Centre, Albany Court Sheltered Housing, Avonbridge Community Café, Falkirk Sewing Studio, the Care Words project volunteers and Jupiter's Our Shed group came together to celebrate their achievements and share their stories.

Statistics show more than one in five adults in Scotland lack basic digital skills¹. This is often due to factors such as poverty, lack of educational qualifications, disability and age. The project focused on working with those who aren't currently digitally-confident, to introduce them to online culture in a way that builds skills and emphasises the personal relevance for them.

Sabine Hellmann supported the group's attendees to create their own digital stories about personal experiences important to them. Participants used digital technology such as tablets, microphones and editing software to produce a narrated story, accompanied by photographs and visual footage.

The People's Story Project is part of Scottish Book Trust's national Digital Storytellers in Residence project. All of the stories from the project are available to watch at digital-stories.scot, as well as on the Falkirk People's Story Project [channel](#).

Sabine has been supported by Vikki Ring at Falkirk libraries, as well as the wider library staff team. Library staff have embraced Sabine's digital storytelling training, and a newly trained staff member is now incorporating digital storytelling into her delivery of the Care Words project in Falkirk Care Homes.

A public screening is anticipated for 27 August at the Bo'ness Hippodrome to conclude the project. Details and booking information will be made available shortly.

Marc Lambert, CEO of Scottish Book Trust, said: “Congratulations to all of those who participated in the Digital Storytellers in Residence programme. It’s wonderful to see so many local stories from Falkirk documented digitally and shared with the wider community. Sabine has helped to showcase these important voices and experiences, and has also provided necessary training that is sure to have a long-lasting impact on the library and community as a whole.”

Sabine Hellmann, Falkirk’s Digital Storyteller, said:

“It has been an absolute pleasure working with all the wonderful participants from different walks of life in the Falkirk area. I’ve learned a great deal about local history, astonishing achievements and life’s challenges. The best parts of the project were the moments when stories were shared and connections made, when there was not a dry eye and very proud storytellers. I hope lots more stories will emerge and the skills gained will help participants on their journey using more digital technology!”

Vikki Ring, Development Librarian - Adults at Falkirk Community Trust, said:

“This project has been fascinating to work on, I have learnt so much from Sabine and I have really enjoyed learning the digital storytelling process. The stories that have been produced are so varied and interesting, and it’s great that Sabine has been able to pass on digital skills to so many different groups in the local community.”

Following a successful pilot of the project in 2017, in North Ayrshire and Fife, Scottish Book Trust was funded by the Scottish Government to support Digital Storytelling residencies in five library locations: Leisure and Culture Dundee, East Ayrshire Leisure, Falkirk Community Trust, Inverclyde Libraries, and Orkney Library and Archive.

Ends

Notes to editors

¹ 21% of the Scottish population lack basic digital skills. (Scottish Council of Voluntary Organisations report, ‘Tackling Digital Exclusion in Scotland’. August 2017)

A selection of groups that have engaged with The People’s Story Falkirk:

Forth Valley Recovery Community Café, Stenhousemuir
Albany Court Sheltered Housing, Denny
Grangemouth Our Shed at Jupiter Urban Wildlife Centre (TCV)
Grangemouth Heritage Trust
FDAMH Women's Group in Larbert
Forth Valley Sensory Centre

Falkirk Peace Quilt Group/Sewing Studio
Camelon Re-Union Canal Volunteers
TCV Coastal Rangers
Storytelling Group Callendar House
Avonbridge Community Café
Quarriers Young Carers

Interviews with Sabine Hellmann, Falkirk's Digital Storyteller, are available on request.

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Scottish Book Trust

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- Gifting books to every child in Scotland to ensure families of all backgrounds can share the joy of books at home.
- Working with teachers to inspire children to develop a love of reading, creating innovative classroom activities, book awards and author events.
- Supporting Scotland's diverse writing community with our training, awards and writing opportunities.
- Funding a range of author events for the public to enjoy and promoting Scottish writing to people worldwide.

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