

Dundee Voices Celebrated Through Digital Storytelling

An event showcasing Dundee voices has been held as part of 'We Are Dundee' digital storytelling project. The project, coordinated by Scottish Book Trust in partnership with Leisure and Culture Dundee and run by Dan Brown, Dundee's appointed Digital Storyteller, worked with local groups to tell their personal stories, whilst developing important digital skills.

Dan has inspired residents across the Dundee area to create digital stories and discover technology in a fun and meaningful way. He has delivered digital storytelling sessions to a wide range of groups, including visually impaired participants, volunteers, mental health groups and local heritage organisations. To date, We Are Dundee has delivered more than 70 workshops to over 120 participants.

Local groups such as Dundee Age Concern, volunteers from Dundee Foodbank and the Timex History Group, as well as Lead Trustee for Libraries at Leisure and Culture Dundee George Laidlaw, attended the Digital Storytelling celebration event, which was held on Thursday, 27 June at The Steps Theatre, Central Library in Dundee.

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.

Dan Brown has supported groups such as Wellgate Day Support and Dundee Blind and Partially Sighted Society, helping them 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, usually accompanied by photographs and visual footage.

Dan also worked with Dundee Women's Festival, Stobsfest and the 40th anniversary of the Wellgate centre, supporting the public to create stories at these events. He has received support from Shona Donaldson and staff across Dundee's library service, who have been instrumental in introducing him to groups. Digital storytelling training has been delivered to library staff and staff from community organisations, to ensure that these partners can continue to work together to bring digital storytelling to the local community.

We Are Dundee 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.

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 Dundee documented digitally and shared with the wider community. Dan 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.”

Dan Brown, Dundee’s Digital Storyteller, said:

“It’s been an absolute privilege to work with people across Dundee and help them share their stories. The project participants really challenged themselves to try something new and share something personal and it’s been a really rewarding experience for everyone.”

Shona Donaldson, Adult Library and Information Services Section Leader at Leisure and Culture Dundee, said:

“I am delighted that Dundee Library and Information Service has taken part in this programme, it has been an excellent opportunity for everyone involved to tell their story and learn new skills.”

Following a successful pilot of the project in 2017, in 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)

Interviews with Dan Brown, Dundee’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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