

## Orkney Digital Storytelling Project Celebrated

An event showcasing the 'Orkney Story Stack' project has been held at Stromness Town Hall. The digital storytelling project was coordinated by Scottish Book Trust and managed locally by Orkney Library & Archive. Mark Jenkins and Rebecca Marr, Orkney's appointed Digital Storytellers, worked with local groups to tell their personal stories whilst developing important digital skills.

Participants across Orkney have been inspired to create digital stories and discover technology in a fun and meaningful way. Digital storytelling sessions have been held with a wide range of groups, including Orkney Blide Trust, Hoy Heritage Centre, Orkney Fossil and Heritage Centre in Burray, Orkney Voices, GMB Fellowship, Stromness Museum and Kirkwall Youth Cafe, as well as open groups held across Orkney. To date, 200 people have engaged with the project. 190 audio recordings were made resulting in over 70 final films.

Participants used digital technology such as tablets, microphones and editing software to produce a narrated story, accompanied by photographs and visual footage.

An audience of around 90 participants and their guests, as well as MSP Liam McArthur, Scottish Book Trust representative Chris Leslie and Orkney Library and Archive staff attended the Digital Storytelling celebration event, which was held on Saturday, 6 July at Stromness Town Hall.

A public event, open to all, will be held on Saturday 13 July at Orkney Library & Archive in Kirkwall from 11am - 3pm. This event will be a chance to watch some of the films, speak to the project organisers and participants, and have a go at using the technology.

Statistics show more than one in five adults in Scotland lack basic digital skills<sup>1</sup>. 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.

Orkney Story Stack is part of Scottish Book Trust's national Digital Storytellers in Residence project. All of the stories from the Orkney project are available to watch at <https://vimeo.com/showcase/5928166>.

Mark and Rebecca have been supported by Karen Walker and David Mackie at Orkney Library and Archive, as well as the wider library staff team. Karen and David have helped Mark and Rebecca to reach out to local groups and deliver digital storytelling training to staff from the library service and community organisations, to help ensure that digital storytelling activities can continue beyond the end of this project.

### **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 Orkney documented digitally and

shared with the wider community. Mark and Rebecca have 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."

**Mark Jenkins and Rebecca Marr, Orkney's Digital Storytellers, said:**

“This has been a tremendously enjoyable project to be involved with. It has been very powerful to hear people’s stories and see those stories develop over the weeks. Orkney is rich in stories and it is great to know that the Orkney Archive will be richer for the breadth of stories deposited there. The project was called Orkney Story Stack with a nod to the Old Man of Hoy and with reference to the stacks of books in libraries. The name describes the project well as there has been layers of stories set down and we hope, through the legacy of the kit, a whole lot more to come.”

**Karen Walker, Principal Librarian and David Mackie, Senior Archivist at Orkney Library & Archive, said:**

“We have been very pleased to be involved in the Orkney Story Stack project and to see it achieve its goal of promoting digital inclusion. It’s particularly pleasing to see how the groups and individuals that have participated in the project have all benefitted from the experience, and that part of the legacy of the project will be that the equipment will remain in Orkney and be available to new groups and individuals to tell their own stories in the future. Training delivered to groups, individuals and library & archive staff will ensure the long-lasting impact for the whole 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](#).

All of the stories created nationally can be seen at <http://digital-stories.scot>

Ends

**Notes to editors**

<sup>1</sup> 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 Story Stack Orkney:

Orkney Voices writing group  
Orkney Blide Trust (a charity that offers mental health support services on Orkney)  
Orkney Camera Club  
Orkney Connect Project (provides opportunities to help young people develop employability skills)  
Stromness Library  
GMB Fellowship  
Hamnavoe Neighbours  
Orkney Yole Association  
Holm Sailing Club  
Hoy Kirk Heritage Centre  
Burray Heritage Centre  
Stromness Museum

Kirkwall Youth Cafe

Interviews with Mark Jenkins and Rebecca Marr are available contact [hello@kolekto.co.uk](mailto:hello@kolekto.co.uk) or 01856 850459

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## Scottish Book Trust

Scottish Book Trust is a national charity changing lives through reading and writing. We inspire and support the people of Scotland to read and write for pleasure through programmes and out-reach work that include:

- 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.

In addition to the funding we receive from the Scottish Government and Creative Scotland, we need the constant support of trusts and foundations, corporate sponsors and individual donors.

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